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# **Mentoring Relationships as Catalysts for Strengthening Youth Social Capital:**

**Findings from DREAM's Village  
Mentoring Program**





## Mentoring Relationships as Catalysts for Strengthening Youth Social Capital:

Findings from DREAM's Village Mentoring Program

# Table of Contents

Mentoring Relationships Are <i>Developmental</i> .....	3
<i>Developmental</i> Mentoring Relationships as Catalysts for Strengthening Social Capital.....	9
<i>Developmental</i> Mentoring Relationships Across Lines of Difference .....	14
Strategies for Strengthening <i>Developmental</i> Mentoring Relationships that Facilitate Social Capital Development.....	17
Additional Reading and Resources .....	20
References.....	20

**Young people require positive relationships with adults to thrive, and mentors are especially well-positioned to support the growth and development of youth as they work towards their life goals. Search Institute partnered with The DREAM program to unpack ways developmentally strong mentoring relationships are experienced by young people, and how these relationships impact their lives.**







# Mentoring Relationships Are *Developmental*

All young people benefit from high-quality relationships that support their development and growth trajectories as they work towards their life goals. Research finds that formal mentoring relationships in particular can play an important role in promoting positive youth development. Participation in mentoring programs, for example, has been associated with a range of positive academic, behavioral, social, and health outcomes among youth,<sup>1-2</sup> which has led to increasing demand for high-quality youth mentor programs. Yet, few studies have identified the key elements of high-quality mentoring relationships for driving these important youth outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, not all mentoring relationships are created equal. Mentoring relationships vary in their quality and effectiveness, and poor relationships and/or relationships that terminate prematurely can be ineffective and harmful to young people.<sup>4</sup> However, effective, high-quality mentoring relationships are likely to be highly reflective of what is known as developmental relationships.

Developmental relationships are close connections through which youth discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them.<sup>5</sup> These relationships go beyond just caring or “positive” relationships by encompassing five interconnected elements, including: express care (show me that I matter), challenge growth (push me to keep getting better), provide support (help me complete tasks and achieve goals), share power (treat me with respect and give me a say), and expand possibilities (connect me with people and places that broaden my world). When young people experience strong developmental relationships with the adults in their lives—including educators and parents—they tend to report positive growth across a wide range of outcomes.<sup>5-6</sup> More recently, studies have shown how mentoring relationships that embrace the five elements of developmental relationships are especially well-situated to contribute to positive youth outcomes, including social capital development and career and education goal progress.<sup>7-9</sup>

The cultivation of a developmental mentoring relationship is especially important when members of a mentoring dyad do not share similar life experiences. When mentors and mentees come from different social classes or have differing racial/ethnic identities, they may experience barriers to building trust, such as limited intercultural awareness or grappling with implicit biases. However, a program model that emphasizes and facilitates the elements of developmental relationships is more likely to produce mentoring relationships that overcome these differences to establish close, trusting bonds that lead to positive youth outcomes.

To further understand how mentoring relationships can serve as developmental relationships and what impact these relationships have on youth and their mentors, recent qualitative findings that have emerged during focus groups and interviews with mentoring dyads who participate in The DREAM Program’s (DREAM) Village Mentoring offering are highlighted. The findings from DREAM illustrate how each of the core elements of Search Institute’s Developmental Relationships Framework comes to life in mentoring dyads and the lasting impact they can have on youth and their mentors.

## **Developmental Relationships Framework**

Search Institute’s Developmental Relationships Framework includes five interconnected elements:

- 1. Express Care**  
Show me that I matter to you.
- 2. Challenge Growth**  
Push me to keep getting better.
- 3. Provide Support**  
Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.
- 4. Share Power**  
Treat me with respect and give me a say.
- 5. Expand Possibilities**  
Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

## Express Care

Expressing care is the foundation of any developmental relationship. Oftentimes, expressing care looks like listening, being dependable, making youth feel known and/or valued, and/or simply showing youth that you enjoy being around them. Mentees in DREAM shared that they felt their mentors expressed care by being “someone who is always there for me” and “checking up on me.” Another DREAM mentee shared that their mentor “made me feel like I had someone to count on if I needed anything.” Both mentors and mentees alike described their relationships with each other as “close” and often shared how they stay in frequent communication with each other. One mentee even shared that they stayed in touch with their mentor every day: “My mentor does it all. I text her every day.” DREAM mentors recognized how important it was for them to be a consistent presence in the lives of their mentees. Doing so often increased trust within the relationship, as one mentor notes:

“I know one of the huge goals of this program is to provide these kids with a stable person that they will consistently see... And so I definitely have seen an increase in social trust in my mentee, knowing that even if she’s having a bad day that Friday, I’ll still just sit next to her while she draws and I’ll still be around for her.”

## Challenge Growth

Challenge growth is an element that can bolster a generally positive mentoring relationship to one that is developmental. Mentors can challenge youth’s

## The DREAM Village Mentoring Program

DREAM’s Village Mentoring Program aims to address a growing gap in access to adult mentors and other important resources needed for life success among youth in low-income households. DREAM utilizes a flexible and dynamic group “village” mentoring model, wherein youth (ages 6–18) are matched 1:1 with a student mentor from a nearby college, and also have opportunities to meet as part of a mentoring community with other mentor-mentee dyads weekly for 2–4 hours. DREAM is a long-term extracurricular option for mentors and mentees, with year-round and year-over-year engagement that facilitates the establishment and maintenance of continuous mentoring relationships. These trusting relationships set the stage for other strong relationships to form, including relationships with peers and other DREAM staff. While building high-quality, trusting relationships is the core component of DREAM, the program is also linked to other program components, including academic support, adventure programming, and summer enrichment.

DREAM was founded in 1999 in a public housing development near Dartmouth College. The program currently serves roughly 500 youth living in 22 low-income housing developments across Vermont, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. DREAM achieved 501(c)(3) status in 2001 and is currently the only AmeriCorps national direct grantee in the state of Vermont.

growth by establishing high expectations and supporting youth to push themselves in order to reach their goals, as well as helping youth productively learn from their mistakes. The academic support, summer enrichment, and adventure programming embedded within DREAM's program model naturally creates a supportive environment in which youth are challenged. DREAM aims to provide each youth with the value-equivalent of \$7,000 of quality out-of-school time adventures and learning experiences (approximately the equivalent of what more affluent youth receive annually). This includes periodic local and regional trips and larger out-of-state trips during the academic year. DREAM also offers summer enrichment opportunities, including weekly local field trips and a larger, end of summer "capstone" designed to introduce youth to a variety of educational and recreational activities. It is often through these new opportunities and experiences that mentors push their mentees to try new things, go out of their comfort zones, and learn from their mistakes along the way.

## Provide Support

There are many ways that mentors can provide support, such as helping youth navigate challenging situations, empowering youth to solve problems, advocating on their behalf, and teaching youth new skills or offering a helping hand. DREAM mentees shared ways in which their mentors provided support, such as giving them a ride to get somewhere, helping with homework, answering questions, and helping to navigate social situations. One mentee even shared how their DREAM mentor served as an advocate by attending meetings at school and being willing to talk to their teachers. Mentees also highlighted how their mentors provided academic support in particular. Mentees spend significant amounts of time on a college campus (approximately 3 hours per week on-site at a local college) with their mentors. By the time mentees graduate high school, they will have spent between three and 12 years regularly visiting a college campus, learning about college culture, and visiting college facilities. This positions DREAM mentors to support postsecondary educational pathways by providing academic assistance, tutoring, college exposure, and assisting with college applications and financial aid/scholarship applications. This additional educational support was described by many mentees in the program. As one mentee shared:

“... this year I was taking a couple of really hard classes, and whenever I needed support with homework or studying, I could always text my DREAM mentor and they would be willing to help.”

It is important to note that because other elements of a strong developmental relationship—such as feeling cared for—were in place, mentees often felt comfortable going to their mentors for support, especially when trying to navigate postsecondary goals such as college. For example,



one DREAM mentee described how they felt they could go to their mentor with questions about college, even when they had a problem or felt uncomfortable: “...as far [back] as I remember... if I have a problem or I feel uncomfortable, I can go to these people who were older than me and who are experiencing things that I—in the future—would like to experience, like going to college.”

## Share Power

Part of building a developmental relationship is also about striving to share power with youth. This includes building mutual respect, collaborating with youth to solve problems and reach goals, and giving youth opportunities to make decisions and lead. DREAM mentees describe ways in which their mentors share power by giving them a say in the type of program activities they participate in with their mentors and by their mentors showing respect through listening: “Mine listened to me when I talked a lot. He’s a really good listener.” Another way DREAM mentors share power is by being vulnerable with their mentees. This can occur when mentors are willing to own up to their own mistakes and flaws. For example, one mentee noted that they felt they were able to develop a stronger bond with their mentors “who don’t mind looking stupid and making fun of themselves in public.” Vulnerability can also occur when mentors are willing to share a personal life experience with a mentee to show them that difficult experiences do not have to feel daunting or isolating. By coaching and collaborating with mentees through difficult experiences, they can help mentees to develop the skills, confidence, and autonomy to successfully navigate life’s challenges.

## Expand Possibilities

The final element of a developmental relationship is expanding possibilities. Mentors can expand youth’s possibilities by connecting them with other people, ideas, experiences, and places that help them grow and expand their world so that they can become their best selves. There are multiple ways DREAM is positioned to expand mentee’s possibilities, including through its “village” group-based mentoring design, and through its emphasis on providing access to local and non-local adventure and summer enrichment experiences. These

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types of experiences give DREAM mentees opportunities to meet new people, see new parts of their communities, and explore places they have never been to before. DREAM mentors further expand their mentees' worldviews and future possibilities by opening doors to new programs and additional resources that mentees were not previously aware of. For example, one DREAM mentee shared of learning about the Upward Bound program (i.e., a federal college access program) through their mentor:

“Just the mentors and stuff giving us opportunities. I wasn’t aware of programs like Upward Bound and stuff, but because through my mentors, I kind of learned about that, and that is helping me.”

Mentors express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities for their mentees within the context of DREAM program activities. The structure of DREAM is well-designed to facilitate developmental mentoring relationships. Through these high-quality relationships and the activities provided by DREAM, mentees learn more about themselves and are encouraged to try new things and work towards their goals. In doing so, mentees are empowered to recognize their options, make informed decisions, and achieve their dreams.







# ***Developmental Mentoring Relationships as Catalysts for Strengthening Social Capital***

Mentoring relationships that are characterized by the five elements of developmental relationships are primed to facilitate social capital development. Social capital can be defined as resources that arise from a web of developmental relationships, which young people can access and mobilize to help them improve their lives and achieve their goals.<sup>10</sup> While mentoring has traditionally focused on the development of strong one-to-one mentoring relationships, youth mentors and mentoring programs that operate as relationship-rich organizations are able to promote social capital by facilitating a web of support that mentees can leverage, as well as cultivating mentees' ability to build connections with other supportive and caring adults outside of the mentoring context.<sup>11</sup> This web of support often results in access to valuable knowledge, skills, opportunities, and other resources that mentees can utilize to reach their goals. DREAM mentors and mentees described several ways in which DREAM supported youth social capital development, including using mentors as a bridge to connections and resources, expanding mentees' web of support, enhancing access to community resources, and strengthening mentees' self-confidence as they work towards their future goals.

## A Bridge to Connections and Resources

One way that DREAM cultivates social capital is by intentionally pairing college-aged mentors with youth. These mentors serve as bridges or “institutional agents”—that is, individuals who provide access to highly valued connections and resources.<sup>12</sup> For example, these mentors are often in a position where they are able to connect youth with others in their own networks (e.g., educators, other mentors), as well as with resources such as academic support, tutoring, and informational support (e.g., supporting with college applications or answering financial questions). DREAM mentees found these connections and additional resources to be highly useful in supporting their long-term goals. One mentee shared:

“And it’s helped me gain a community without actually even thinking about it. Now as I’m growing older and I’ve learned that it’s not necessarily what you know, it’s who you know—just knowing that I know people who are in college, who know professors, or I know people who can help me get connections, that’s really helpful.”

## Expanded Web of Support

There are many opportunities to expand mentees’ web of support or social network through DREAM’s programming. One of the unique components of DREAM is that it leverages a group-based, village mentoring design, which promotes connections to be built with various mentees and mentors beyond just the one-to-one mentoring dyad. This type of mentoring may promote youth social capital development more effectively by increasing youth access to multiple relationships, connections, and resources beyond those of just their individual mentor. For example, DREAM



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mentors described how this group-based mentoring allows them to connect with other mentees beyond their own:

“... there’s also just a lot of friendliness between all the mentors and mentees because—especially during group programming—it’s not as much of you only stick by your mentee. It’s just everyone helping out everyone and just being together. So that way, I’ve gotten to know a lot of mentees and not just my own.”

The group-based mentoring model also allows for mentees to develop stronger relationships and connections with their peers. As one DREAM mentor shared, “I think—just generally—that it encourages them to get to know other kids that live around them. And a lot of times they are in similar situations to them...” Although many of the mentees know each other from living in the same housing communities, DREAM gives them opportunities to connect with each other in a context that is centered around growth, exploration, and trusting relationships. This adds important value, as DREAM mentors can help mentees recognize their peers as a significant form of support and a connection that can be strengthened. Furthermore, many of the friendships and connections built in DREAM are long-lasting, as mentees can be in the program from an early age (5–6 years old) through high school graduation. One mentee described how experiencing DREAM with their friends led to stronger friendships: “my friends and I did DREAM together when we were younger, and I feel like those relationships strengthened because it was a thing that we did together.” It is likely that these long-lasting friendships will serve as connections that DREAM mentees can rely on long past their tenure in the program.

Although increased self-confidence is not always thought of as a form of social capital, it can be a valuable resource that motivates youth to pursue their life goals and access additional connections and resources needed along the way.



## Access to Community Resources

In addition to both one-to-one and group-based mentoring, DREAM also provides opportunities for adventure programming and summer enrichment activities, which further promotes social capital development by broadening mentees' worldview and providing access to a myriad of community resources. Given that youth from low-income and marginalized racial/ethnic backgrounds are often disproportionately gate-kept from high-quality adventure and summer enrichment programming, DREAM's programming actively counters such inequities in access. DREAM mentors shared how these experiences often "broaden mentees' worldviews" and exposed them to new ideas, people, and places in mentees' own communities and beyond. Mentees shared that these opportunities gave them a chance to explore something new, stating things such as, "So just doing that with my friends strengthened our friendship, and also it gave us opportunities to do things that we wouldn't normally get to do." Some DREAM mentors shared how these experiences inspired youth:

“... he really appreciated and enjoyed [these adventure trips] a lot because it brought him out of the bubble... which just is his peers in the school group. And to see something larger and in the greater Northeast was really beneficial for him. And he wanted to get back out there and see it again, so [it was] very inspirational for him.”

## Greater Self-Confidence in Reaching Future Goals

One of the most notable ways that mentees changed as a result of their participation in DREAM was in their self-confidence. Although increased self-confidence is not always thought of as a form of social capital, it can be a valuable resource that motivates youth to pursue their life goals and access additional connections and resources needed along the way.

DREAM mentors shared how they saw their mentees come “out of their shells” and feel more confident in their ability to work toward their goals. Mentors and mentees described how this self-confidence translated into stronger relationships and relationship-building skills. Some of the mentors noted that they saw mentees not only build stronger relationships, but also learn to “navigate conflicts better with their peers in the program.” A DREAM mentee also described how this newfound confidence made them more hopeful about their future: “DREAM just has made me more confident in myself—that even though I might be a first generation in my family to go to college and stuff, I can do it and it’s made me more hopeful.” Alongside this realized confidence, DREAM mentors also shared how their mentees exhibited more agency in making life and goal-oriented decisions: “I think it’s partially just part of growing up... but that agency



and confidence. I feel like she makes real decisions and thinks about things more intentionally than when I first met her.”

This confidence also resulted in mentees having greater postsecondary aspirations as a result of being in DREAM. It is likely the relationships formed with college-going mentors and the regular exposure to college campuses went a long way toward strengthening the confidence of many DREAM mentees. Applying and going to college can be a scary endeavor for many young people, especially for first-generation college students. However, DREAM mentees appear to feel more psychologically prepared due to their exposure to college campuses and repeated interactions with college students through DREAM. For example, many DREAM mentees shared how having the support of their mentor encouraged them and gave them more motivation to pursue similar experiences as their mentors:

“And what’s different for my situation and many others that are in the DREAM program is that a lot of our parents didn’t get to do that. They didn’t go to college, or they didn’t experience growing up in America. And because my situation was like that, I couldn’t go to my parents with the questions that I had, so usually I would go to my DREAM mentors. And so that kind of gave me more motivation to pursue something like a college education when I grow up.”





# ***Developmental Mentoring Relationships Across Lines of Difference***

Developmental mentoring relationships empower youth to explore beyond their comfort zones and expand their sense of community. By connecting participating youth to a mentor who is engaged in the greater community through DREAM, mentees can develop a greater awareness of all of the resources at their disposal. Further, the village model reinforces the idea that relationships are developed within networks, and that strengthening relationships within the network enhances one's ability to access and receive needed resources. With support from their mentors, mentees learn how to utilize their networks, ultimately contributing to increased self-confidence in future goal attainment. DREAM, therefore, leverages developmental relationships to support youth social capital development and future success.

The promotion of social capital development and positive youth outcomes is only possible when mentors and mentees have cultivated a strong developmental relationship, especially when mentors and mentees do not share similar life experiences. Mere exposure to a mentor from a privileged background is unlikely to be sufficient for promoting positive development, and at worst could be harmful. It is likely that mentoring dyads may experience relationship-building challenges, including lack of intercultural competence, implicit biases, and difficulties navigating cultural divides and building trust with someone who does not share similar life experiences.<sup>13-14</sup> This is especially true when mentors and mentees come from different social classes and/or have different racial/ethnic identities. Consistent with most mentoring programs, many mentoring dyads within DREAM do not share similar life experiences. DREAM mentees are all youth living in low-income housing, and their mentors are all college-aged mentors, many from elite local colleges and universities who come from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds.



As evidenced in past research, mentors who are unaware of the systematic barriers and oppression that affect the lives of mentees often struggle to develop a strong relationship that promotes social capital.<sup>15</sup> Yet, relationships formed in DREAM appear to be characteristic of a strong developmental relationships that are capable of supporting social capital development over time. One of the factors that made this possible within DREAM was the connection the program and its mentors intentionally formed with mentees, their families, and their communities.

This intentionality is built into the program design and activities. DREAM pairs the program's youth with college-going mentors not just to increase mentees' exposure to college, but also because college students are younger than most adults, positioning them as better able to relate to their mentees and remember what it is like to be at their age. This facilitates a basis of connection and understanding within the mentor-mentee dyad, even when mentors and mentees have different life experiences. Further, colleges and universities tend to be hot spots of progressive thinking on issues related to identity, social systems, and equity, which has influenced many of DREAM's mentors to be forward-thinking and self-aware of how their differences may impact their relationships with their mentees. To reinforce this mindset, DREAM provides ongoing training and professional development on topics related to privilege and diversity, equity, and inclusion to its mentors. This recruitment and training strategy helps to prepare mentors to establish strong mentoring relationships across lines of difference.

By serving as a DREAM mentor, young adults also have the opportunity to connect with the communities of their mentees. Mentors often visit their mentee's housing community, and attend adventure and field trips within and outside the local community context. For many mentors, this led to an increased understanding of the life experiences of the youth they mentor and a broader understanding of their community and the world around them. DREAM has made an intentional effort to connect mentors with mentees' families and local community through activities including participation in local community boards, community gardens, and increased activi-

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ties that involve both mentors and mentee families. Mentors note that these types of community engagement activities were “really important, not just for developing the relationship with the community and their parents, but also so that our relationship with the kids is stronger.” It is likely that participation in these activities increased trusting relationships and engendered stronger developmental relationships among mentoring dyads.

Participating in DREAM also increased many mentors’ sense of social responsibility to the local community. Mentors frequently acknowledged that they benefited from being a part of their community and they wanted to find ways to give back; being a mentor in DREAM was one of the ways they felt they could do that: “I started doing DREAM because I felt like I was benefiting a lot from the greater community that my college is in, but I felt like I wasn’t giving anything to it.” This increased sense of social responsibility also went beyond participation in DREAM. Mentors also shared how, after their involvement in DREAM, they wanted to find ways to continue to contribute to their new communities. For example, one mentor shared:

“I think I’ll just continue to make a conscious effort to give back to the communities that I’m in. So I think after doing DREAM, I will definitely be more conscious to do that.”

Despite the different life experiences that DREAM mentors and their mentees experience, mentors and mentees described ways in which they formed developmentally strong relationships that ultimately expanded their mentees’ webs of support. It is likely that these strong relationships were able to develop due to DREAM’s program model, its emphasis on building high-quality relationships with mentees and their communities, and the training and ongoing support mentors received.



Participating in DREAM also increased many mentors’ sense of social responsibility to the local community.





# Strategies for Strengthening *Developmental* Mentoring Relationships that Facilitate Social Capital Development

Emerging findings from DREAM show how a *developmentally* strong mentoring relationship—one that shows mentees they matter, challenges their growth, gives them a voice and say, provides both instrumental and emotional forms of support, and expands their possibilities—is critical for supporting mentee social capital development and positive outcomes. Again, it is important to note that this type of relationship may not always form, especially when mentors and mentees do not share similar life experiences. Therefore, it is essential that youth mentoring programs provide mentoring dyads with the support needed to cultivate these types of relationships. Below are several strategies and lessons learned from DREAM about how to support mentoring relationships that are developmental and cultivate social capital development.

1

## **Encourage mentors to connect mentees with people in their web of support.**

DREAM mentees talked about how their mentors provided them with access to connections and resources within their networks. Mentors can use their networks to connect their mentees to a host of beneficial connections and resources. These could be things such as internship opportunities, information about applying to college, or even connecting a mentee to a friend or peer with a similar interest or experience. The key is to confirm that it is a resource or connection that mentees and their families value and find useful. It is important that mentors do so intentionally, ensuring their mentee's safety and privacy, while also giving their mentees the space, opportunity, and voice to express their interests and future goals.

2

**Help mentees strengthen existing relationships.** Findings from DREAM showed that youth felt more confident in building relationships with their peers and others because of their mentoring relationships. Mentors can encourage youth to strengthen existing relationships, such as with family members, peers, or other community members. Familial relationships and support provided by individuals within one's own community are often untapped resources of social capital, but are also important assets and forms of support to develop and maintain over time. It is important that mentors help youth build webs of support, including forms of support and resources that may be different from what mentors have found valuable for themselves or what is seen as valued within society.<sup>16</sup>

3

**Support mentees in forging new relationships and expanding their webs of support.** DREAM mentees talked about the increased self-confidence they gained as a result of the program. This sense of confidence often translated into mentees developing relationship-building skills and more agency to pursue their life goals. In a group mentoring setting, mentors can explicitly and intentionally help mentees by supporting their confidence and relationship skills to build new connections across dyads and draw on those connections as they work towards their long-term goals. Throughout these relationships, mentors teach youth skills that enable them to identify additional mentors both inside and outside of their mentoring programs, initiate those relationships, and find ways to mobilize those relationships in pursuit of goals. Moreover, long-term programs such as DREAM are likely to result in youth having a team of current and alumni mentors who they can rely on for a plurality of connections, support, and resources.



Mentors teach youth skills that enable them to identify additional mentors both inside and outside of their mentoring programs.



**4****Assist mentors in building stronger relationships with mentees' commu-**

**nities.** Studies find that parents who feel more connected to their child's mentor are more likely to approach the mentoring relationship from a collaborative perspective.<sup>17</sup> This suggests that mentors' relationships with other adults in the mentees' lives can have an impact on the mentoring relationship, and mentoring relationships themselves can also influence the relationships that youth build with others within their social networks.<sup>18</sup> The relationships that DREAM mentors cultivated with the community helped them feel more connected to their mentees and the community. Moreover, mentors can help youth see the preexisting assets within their communities via opportunities like adventure and summer enrichment activities. These are community resources that mentees can continue to draw on even outside of their mentoring relationships.

**5****Involve mentees and mentors in social change efforts.**

DREAM mentors described a stronger sense of social responsibility and wanting to give back to the communities they were living in as a part of being in DREAM. To further support mentee agency and autonomy, mentors and youth mentoring programs can provide youth with tailored support and broader experiences (e.g., community events) that not only strengthen the mentoring relationship but also support positive social change efforts within their own communities. These types of opportunities are likely to support youth from marginalized communities to become more empowered and active agents of social change.<sup>19</sup>

With all of these strategies, it is important to continue to foster developmentally strong and trusting mentoring relationships first. Findings from DREAM demonstrate the importance the quality of the relationship has on mentees' experiences within the program and the impact it has on youth social capital development. It is when this high-quality relationship is in place, that the impact of the one-to-one relationship can be expanded to increase mentees' connectedness and broaden mentees' web of support. Working in partnership with youth, their families, and their communities, mentors have the potential to further cultivate mentees' agency and skills at forming their own connections and mobilizing these connections and the resources that result as they pursue their life goals. It is this skill that is likely to last well beyond any youth mentoring program and ultimately will help youth thrive in the ways that they seek in order to reach their full potential and life ambitions.

## Additional Reading and Resources

- **Becoming a Better Mentor: Strategies to Be There for Young People: Expanding Networks of Support by Sarah Schwartz.** Additional tips and strategies mentors can utilize to support social capital development. Click [here](#) to access.
- **Social Capital Assessment + Learning for Equity (SCALE) Measures by Search Institute.** Access Search Institute’s measurement user guide and technical manual for measures that can be used to help organizations assess and build social capital for and with young people. Click [here](#) to access.
- **Group Mentoring: Supplement to the Elements for Effective Practice for Mentoring by MENTOR.** Provides recommendations for group mentoring programs. Click [here](#) to access.
- **5 Steps for Building & Strengthening Students’ Networks by Christensen Institute.** A play-book to help organizations implement and adapt strategies, tools, and metrics to build and strengthen students’ networks. Click [here](#) to access.

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