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INSTITUTE

Promoting Positive Youth Development

2022 Impact Report

Search Institute, a leading research to practice non-profit organization focused on positive youth development, collaborates with schools and youth-serving organizations to conduct applied research, design solutions that aim to advance equity, and create an environment where all young people can thrive.



Promoting Positive Youth Development

2022 Impact Report

Table of Contents

Letter from the CEO	4
Year at a Glance	6
Highlights	8
Our Work.....	10
Financial Summary	14





Letter from the CEO

In my inaugural year as CEO of Search Institute, I extend sincere appreciation to our dedicated Board of Directors, committed staff, supportive funding partners, and esteemed nonprofit leaders at collaborating organizations. Despite the societal challenges we collectively encountered, 2022 has proven to be a pivotal year as we lay the foundation for the next chapter in our enduring legacy of impact in youth development.

Over the past three decades, Search Institute's applied research has been instrumental in shaping the landscape of youth development across various sectors and systems. Since the initiation of our work in 1957 and the groundbreaking Framework of Developmental Assets in 1990, we have been at the forefront of the positive youth development movement, fundamentally influencing how youth-serving programs and professionals approach their work. Remaining steadfast in our commitment, we continually innovate to create new opportunities, working models, and processes that cultivate the conditions for young people to thrive.

At Search Institute, we firmly believe that actionable knowledge arises at the intersection of rigorous research, practitioner and community insights, and the voices of youth. Striking a delicate balance among these invaluable sources of

wisdom allows us to adapt our work to diverse cultures, contexts, and experiences, ensuring that our efforts genuinely advance equity for all young people. Everything we do—research, practical strategies, surveys, learning experiences—has to be done with a focus on balancing rigorous research with the quality, effectiveness and usability of every tool we develop.

We also recognize that in order to address the current realities of our communities, we must prioritize becoming more agile and adaptable. We've created a work environment that embraces team members from across the country, with a focus on inclusion and collaboration, enabling us to access the best talent to advance our mission. As we navigate new and changing contexts, heightened inequities, mental health and loneliness crises, and the increased stressors on youth-serving workers and educators, the need of our Search Institute's research, theoretical frameworks, and practical solutions to inform and guide the field of positive youth development.

The research undertaken and practical solutions created in 2022 position Search Institute to continue evolving in how we engage and support youth-serving organizations and practitioners. With an unwavering commitment to our mission, we are dedicated to creating the necessary conditions for all youth to thrive.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Houltberg, Ph.D., LMFT
CEO, Search Institute

**We discover actionable knowledge
at the intersection of developmental science,
professional practice and youth voice.**

Year at a Glance

AMPLIFYING
Youth Voice

107,813
young people surveyed

EXPANDING
Leaders' & Practitioners' Capacity

14,375
professionals trained

SUPPORTING
Youth Serving Organizations

377
organizations implemented
our practical solutions

STRENGTHENING
the PYD Field

15
published
peer-reviewed
articles

Knowledge
and insights
shared at
top national
conferences.



LAUNCHED
Search Institute's summer scholars
research fellowship

Providing Access to
RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Launched our **Resources Hub**, a research-based collection of tools, activities, measures and other resources designed to support practitioners and leaders in helping young people succeed and thrive.

more than **100** free resources

11,260
Resources Hub users

Research-to-Practice PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that research needs to be integrated into practice, and through research-to-practice partnerships with youth-serving organizations, our team creates practical solutions, tools, and resources that are respected and implemented throughout the world.

In addition to our reach across the United States, Search Institute also has a significant presence around the world. In 2022, Search Institute partnered with organizations and scholars across multiple countries and continents including Australia, Denmark, Germany, Kenya, Singapore and the United Kingdom.



Highlights

Research and Practice

Search Institute simultaneously lives in the arenas of research and practice. We identify research questions and design studies informed by practitioner insights and needs to solve problems of practice, and we partner with youth-serving organizations and practitioners on the co-creation and implementation of solutions to ensure that all young people, regardless of background or circumstances, receive the nurturing, support, and guidance they need to learn, grow, and thrive.

Reflecting on a Decade of Developmental Relationships

Over the last decade, we have consistently found a positive impact of developmental relationships on youth outcomes. Although there have been some differences in the levels of developmental relationships reported by young people across various contexts (e.g., in school or out-of-school time) and demographics of youth (e.g., racial-ethnic backgrounds, socio-economic groups and sex, age, gender identity, and sexual orientation) the positive impact of developmental relationships has remained consistent. The positive link between developmental relationships and positive youth outcomes have been observed in both cross-sectional studies and longitudinal research that follows the same youth over time. **When developmental relationships increase over time, so do positive youth development outcomes.**

After 10 years of building our Developmental Relationships framework, we have identified major streams of research and practice that need considerably more attention. For instance, what do teachers and school leaders want and need to adapt and implement the Developmental Relationships Framework for the students in their schools? Another critical question is, how can we infuse developmental relationships into youth-serving organizations in ways that center equity and support organizational change?

This kind of work will be the focus of Search Institute’s efforts over the next decade, in order to help organizations, communities, and individual change agents intentionally cultivate developmentally powerful and inclusive connections among adults and youth, among youth peers, and among the adults around youth, that together provide equitable opportunity for all young people.

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Benjamin Houlberg, Ph.D., LMFT
CEO, Search Institute



Our Work

At the heart of our work, we are helping organizations and communities ensure that young people have access to developmental relationships that promote equity of opportunity, positive youth development, and thriving.

Cultivating Connections. A relationship gap exists for too many young people—the gap between what they need, and what they experience. By understanding what’s working and what’s not in creating relationship-rich spaces for all youth, we can design tools to improve youth-adult relationships. Search Institute partnered with the Carlson Family Foundation to conduct the **State of Relationships study** to further this understanding. This study explored what schools and out-of-school time (OST) programs across one state, Minnesota, are doing to build strong youth-adult relationships. The study findings are from Minnesota, but provide applicable and relevant insights for any state, school, or OST program that wants to invest in a relationship-rich organization.

Educator-to-Educator (E2E), funded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, is an example of going deeper into becoming a relationship-rich organization. This project comes from our work in schools on strengthening educator-to-educator relationships, which play a role in many of the needs and anxieties that are common in school settings, such as teacher retention/turnover, learning losses, mental health concerns, and student engagement. Simply put, educator-to-educator relationships are not only crucial for educator outcomes, but also trickle down to impact students. Acknowledging that E2E is critical, and knowing that such relationships can look very different depending on social markers like race/ethnicity and gender identity, we are creating a framework to identify the essential elements that make up positive and strong educator-to-educator relationships. The framework development process is grounded in educator voices, and we will also be developing a suite of tools, resources, and measurements to ensure the framework is actionable and educator-oriented.

Rooted in Relationships: Cultivating Character Through Communities of Practice, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, aims to promote stronger webs of relationship for youth through stronger inter-organizational collaboration among key community organizations. Character virtues are nurtured through positive, developmental relationships—the kinds that young people often experience in high-performing, dynamic youth-serving organizations. At the same time, youth workers are typically undervalued, disconnected, and unsupported in the field, leading to high turnover and burnout. The Rooted in Relationships: Cultivating Character Through Communities of Practice Project, addresses these challenges in the youth development field by tapping its unique capacity to nurture character strengths through developmental relationships. Search Institute is partnering with UP Partnership in San Antonio, Texas, to refine and test a catalytic community of practice not only for creating relationship-rich, character-nurturing cultures in youth-serving organizations across San Antonio, but ultimately to serve as a model for other communities across the United States.

Search Institute addresses the toughest problems facing young people today by closing the gap between research and practice.

Search Institute’s Cultural Adaptation of Developmental Relationships (CADRE) Project – a schoolwide system for strengthening developmental relationships – is designed to support educators in the implementation of Developmental Relationships and in building strong relationships with all students. Funded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the project partners with schools to co-create a system that is focused on adapting, implementing, and continuously improving implementation of the Developmental Relationships Framework, practices, and measures in their school and classrooms. The process is designed to provide support in making Developmental Relationships fit their school context and be culturally relevant to their students, while providing ongoing capacity building (e.g., new resources, training, and coaching) to support schools understanding, adaptation, and implementation.

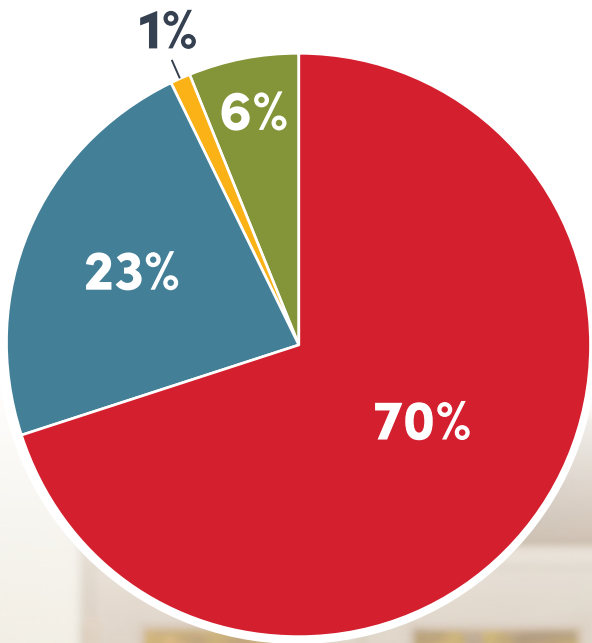
The Social Capital Tools Project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is an example of our continuing and expanding work on the importance of social capital in the lives of young people. Through this project, we are partnering with an exemplary group of youth-serving organizations to co-design and pilot test an innovative tool called the Youth Opportunity Navigator. This tool is designed to equip practitioners and youth-serving organizations to gain insights into how they support youth in building a web of transformative relationships and connections, while also providing practical solutions to support moving from data to action and ultimately, to become a social capital promoting organization.



Financial Summary

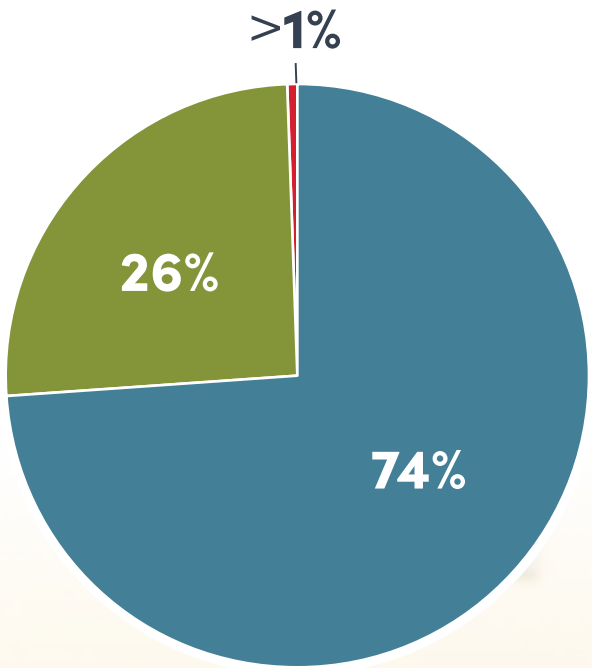
2022 Income


Grants & Contracts	\$3,766,718
Publications, Surveys & Training	\$1,249,020
Contributions	\$38,268
Other	\$348,979
Total	\$5,402,985



2022 Expenses

Program Services	\$3,762,278
Management & General	\$1,311,310
Fundraising	\$520
Total	\$5,074,108





Search Institute is a nonprofit organization with a sixty-plus-year history of collaborating with partners to conduct and apply research that promotes positive youth development and advances equity. We are also creating tools and resources that help schools, youth programs and families form and strengthen those relationships with and among young people.

We depend on charitable gifts and grants to pursue the research that makes such a difference in the lives of youth worldwide. Join our effort to advance equity and help all young people thrive with your gift today.

searchinstitute.org/donate



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