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TEST: Positive adult connections with youth are essential

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Dignity of Children, Inc.
SPARKING THE INNER LIGHT IN EVERY CHILD, ONE ADULT AT A TIME.



“More, perhaps, than teachers, afterschool program staff are poised to provide caring relationships, teach perseverance, and challenge students.”

A lot goes into structuring an after-school program that leads to student success: effective pedagogy, engaging activities, student participation, and so much more. Another element — perhaps the most important — is positive connections with students.

Healthy relationships with adults are key to student success. In after-school programs, the ability to trust and connect with program leaders is foundational to student engagement in activities and the development of life skills such as perseverance and meeting challenges.

But, how do you train staff how to develop these positive relationships? After-school staff, particularly first-time school leaders, may struggle to find healthy balance and boundaries when it comes to interacting with children.

Ginger Shea is the manager of Special Programs and Services in Oxnard School District in California. In her article, *The Key to Student Success in Afterschool Programs*, published in the National Institute on Out-of-School Time Afterschool Matters Journal, she shares how she uses the [Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Framework](#) to shape after-school programs into caring environments that foster student success — and how you can, too.

Do you want to help your staff build better connections with youth?

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Upcoming Events!



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