Loving and Supporting our Young People: *One Caring Adult at a Time*

After School in Alexandria Forum

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Reasons Why, What & How

- Historical context
- Murder Capital
- Project ReachOut
- No Clue
- Framework for action
Science of Learning

• Brain development
• Adolescent brain development
• Stress: There is a connection between adversity, stress and academic performance.
• Trust is healing: DNA changes in response to the environments and relationships children experience.
• When children experience a consistent and supportive connection with a trusted adult, it can alter their brain chemistry.
Trust is Fuel for Healthy Brain Development

• The Antidote to Stress is Trust*
• Power of Relationships in Schools

*Turnaround for Children
What’s the Purpose of your Programming?

- ????
If your program was a car?
Drive a Buick

• Belonging
• Usefulness
• Influence
• Competence
• K - ???
What’s the Purpose of your Programming?

- Improve academic performance
- Explore/develop new interests
- Create broader perspectives
- Reduce stress
- Improve attendance
- Improve behavior & social skills
- Connect to services and supports
- Improve self esteem
- Provide essential life skills
- Provide enrichment activities
6 Benefits of Afterschool Programs

- Create a sense of belonging
- Improve social skills
- Provide academic support
- Make learning more fun
- Provide safety & supervision
- Build confidence
Building Blocks for Learning*

*Turnaround for Children
Caring Adults?

- Centerpiece of children’s development
- Guides
- Caretakers
- Advisors

“Parents come first. But children and youth also need other caring adults in all aspects of their lives: in their schools, neighborhoods, activities and communities. They need a network of caring and nurturing relationships with adults among their extended families, neighbors, teachers and coaches. ...this positive influence in their lives proves to be substantially beneficial.” – America’s Promise Alliance
Dual-Capacity Building Framework
Policy & Program Goals

To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the “4 C” areas:
- Capabilities (skills and knowledge)
- Connections (networks)
- Cognition (beliefs, values)
- Confidence (self-efficacy)
Family & Staff Capacity Outcomes

School and Program Staff who can
- Honor and recognize families’ funds of knowledge
- Connect family engagement to student learning
- Create welcoming, inviting cultures

Families who can negotiate multiple roles
- Supporters
- Encouragers
- Monitors
- Advocates
- Decision Makers
- Collaborators
Why we Engage Parents & Families

• Positive interactions with families lowers stress levels in children
• Improves buy-in & trust
• Strengthens positive supports – team effect
• Keeps them informed
• Supports parents/families
• Strengthens their agency and efficacy
**Bold, Brave & Brilliant***

- **Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week** – April 22-26, 2019
- Afterschool dates back 200 years – origins of afterschool, settlement houses, immigrant communities.
- Afterschool people brought immigrants together – those folks were “**Bold, Brave & Brilliant**”.
- Afterschool programs told those children that they had value, told them that they had a voice... we were the ones that told them how to use that voice.
- Afterschool staff taught those young people how to be **Bold, Brave & Brilliant**.
- Afterschool Professionals Matter!

*Gina Warner Keynote at the 2019 National Afterschool Association Convention*
http://bit.ly/FceConf19
Resources

- https://www.edutopia.org/video/power-relationships-schools
- http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/researchIssueBriefs.cfm
- https://www.americaspromise.org/promise/caring-adults