

Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework

This framework synthesizes decades of research evidence, practice wisdom, and theory to capture a holistic view of children's developmental needs from early childhood to young adulthood. Whether at home or school, in an afterschool program, or out in their community, young people are always developing. Broader societal contexts, systems, and institutions shape youth development—often creating big disparities in opportunities and outcomes. Adults also play a pivotal role, and can give young people a better chance at successful lives by understanding and intentionally nurturing their development.

Developmental Experiences Can Happen in All Settings

Children are shaped by their interactions with the world, the adults around them, and how they make meaning of their experiences no matter where they are.



Developmental Experiences Require Action and Reflection

Children learn through developmental experiences that combine **Action** and **Reflection**, ideally within the context of trusting relationships with adults.



Developmental Experiences Build Components and Key Factors of Success

Over time, through developmental experiences, children build four foundational components, which underlie three "key factors" to success.

Foundational Components

Self-Regulation includes awareness of oneself and one's surroundings, and managing one's attention, emotions, and behaviors in goal-directed ways.

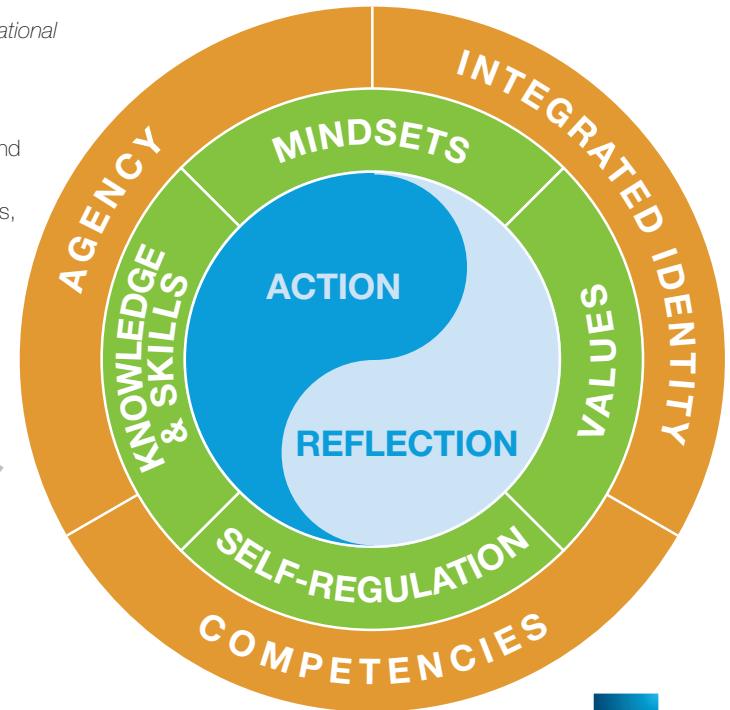
Knowledge is sets of facts, information, or understanding about self, others, and the world. **Skills** are the learned ability to carry out a task with intended results or goals, and can be either general or domain-specific.

Mindsets are beliefs and attitudes about oneself, the world, and the interaction between the two. They are the lenses we use to process everyday experience.

Values are enduring, often culturally-defined, beliefs about what is good or bad and what is important in life. Values serve as broad guidelines for living and provide an orientation for one's desired future.

Key Factors

Being successful means having the **Agency** to make active choices about one's life path, possessing the **Competencies** to adapt to the demands of different contexts, and incorporating different aspects of oneself into an **Integrated Identity**.



Continued on reverse.

Focus of Development Changes as Children Grow Older

Providing the right experiences for growth requires knowledge of child and youth development. The development of the four foundational components, along with agency, integrated identity, and competencies, occurs at different stages throughout childhood and adolescence. Development into a successful young adult entails growth of the *self* and one's abilities to interact with *others* and navigate the broader *world*. We define success beyond education and employment to include healthy relationships, a meaningful place within a community, and contributing to a larger good.

