

How to Build a Foundation of Positive Youth Development in Young People

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Having a foundation to center youth development programming in 5 key areas aids in the growth and development of our children. The 5 C's include: Connection, Confidence, Character, Competence and Caring. Let's take a moment to uncover what each of those areas encompasses.

Connection: It's important for a young person to feel safe and connected. Youth need positive relationships with parents, friends, coaches, and mentors. These positive relationships contribute to personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

Apply: As an adult in a young person's life – find a way to truly connect with them: sit down and play the video game with them, or go on a hike where you are both free from technology. Listen to their likes and frustrations, commit it to your memory and use it in the perfect moment.

Confidence: Confidence provides a sense of self-worth and perception that one can achieve their desired goals through their own actions.

Apply: Help a young person explore a new opportunity: engage in volunteer work, help them find a part-time job. Mastering a new skill helps them build confidence. Above all model confidence in yourself. Role model how to face new situations with courage. Let them know about the times when you were brave.

Character: Taking responsibility and showing respect for societal and cultural rules shows that youth are willing to declare a sense of independence and individuality.

Apply: When youth have the opportunity to make a decision, guide them to think through the ethical approach and watch the positive results in their daily life.

Competence: Competence is the ability to act effectively in academic, social and work situations.

Apply: Believe in the child's ability to develop new skills. Encourage them & let them problem solve!

Caring: Feeling empathy and displaying sympathy based on one's emotions allows youth to show they genuinely care for others.

Apply: Keep your word, be honest, and write notes of encouragement. A simple compliment can completely turn their day around.

Youth who are devoted to active participation in each of the 5 C's become adults who contribute to family, work, home and community, leading to a sixth C – which is **Contribution**.

Setting this foundation for our youth and cultivating these POSITIVE environments for youth allow for POSITIVE youth development to take place. This approach by Karen Pittman, an early advocate for positive youth development, led the charge to shift the paradigm in youth work from prevent and fixing behaviors to building and nurturing "all the beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, attributes, and skills that result in a healthy and productive adolescence and adulthood". Initiatives around changing behavior are no easy task, but investing now in our youth will be an opportunity to invest in a brighter future for everyone!

This article comes from a series of resources developed by Nebraska 4-H Youth Development professionals. Learn more about 4-H at 4h.unl.edu.



Tips for Resolutions that Last

Thinking about making a New Year's resolution, but worried about keeping it? Good intentions alone aren't enough. So what can you do this New Year to make changes that last? This year make your goals **SMART**, as in **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely. Be specific and think about "W" words: who, what, where, when, and why. To help make your New Year's resolutions stick, check out these tips.

- **Make them measureable.** Make your goals this year measureable by setting criteria for knowing whether you've reached your goal. Ask yourself how you will measure progress and if your goal is attainable.
- **Break up larger goals into smaller ones.** Have you ever made a bunch of resolutions, but been overwhelmed with trying to make changes? It's easy to get discouraged with big goals that don't have any payoff in the short-term, so it can help to break up a larger goal into smaller ones.
- **Put your goals on a timeline.** Make sure your goals are realistic and that they are something you are willing and able to work toward. Also, do you have a time frame? Push yourself forward by setting a date for smaller and larger goals.
- **Reward yourself in healthy ways.** Want to set a New Year's resolution, but have trouble staying motivated to make changes? One way to stay motivated is to reward yourself when you reach "mini" goals or milestones. Avoid using rewards that are not in line with your resolution; reward yourself with something that reinforces your new habit such as a health or fitness magazine subscription or fitness equipment.

This year remember to make your New Year's resolutions specific, measureable, attainable, realistic, and timely. By applying these concepts and techniques you can reduce the chances of feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or losing motivation.

Source: food.unl.edu

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Saturday Keynote: Vaughn Hammond, Agriculture & Orchard Manager at Valla's Pumpkin Patch & Apple Orchard in Gretna, Nebraska

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