

Research & Foundations

Grounded in research.
Designed for real-world practice.

This model is informed by a strong body of research in social-emotional learning, experiential learning, and youth development. It translates established theory into a practical, adaptable approach for real-world impact.



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

High-quality SEL programming leads to improvements in academic achievement, relationship skills, well-being, and long-term life outcomes.

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2020). *What is social and emotional learning?* <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>
- Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development*, 88(4), 1156–1171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12864>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2021). *Beyond academic learning: First results from the Survey of Social and Emotional Skills*. <https://www.oecd.org/education/cei/social-emotional-skills-study/>



Experiential & Real-World Learning

Young people learn more deeply and retain knowledge longer when they engage in hands-on, real-world experiences.

- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Macmillan. <https://archive.org/details/experienceeducati00dewe>
- Bell, S. (2010). Project-based learning for the 21st century: Skills for the future. *The Clearing House*, 83(2), 39–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650903505415>
- Walker, A., Leary, H., Hmelo-Silver, C. E., & Ertmer, P. A. (2015). Essential conditions for project-based learning: A comparative review. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.7771/1541-5015.1526>



Youth Development, Agency & Participation

Youth thrive when they have voice, choice, and opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect them and their communities.

- Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Bowers, E. P., & Geldhof, G. J. (2015). Positive youth development and relational-developmental-systems. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science* (7th ed.). Wiley.
- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/10022>
- Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J. A. M., Lonczak, H. S., & Hawkins, J. D. (2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 98–124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203260092>
- Zeldin, S., Christens, B. D., & Powers, J. L. (2013). The psychology and practice of youth-adult partnership: Bridging generations for youth development and community change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 51, 385–397. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-012-9563-y>



Reflection & Learning Integration

Intentional reflection helps young people make meaning from experience and apply insights to future action.

- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice Hall. <https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/experiential-learning/P20000003672/97801312952613>
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (1985). Reflection: Turning experience into learning. Kogan Page. <https://www.koganpage.com/product/reflection-9780749403317>
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>



Systems Thinking & Real-World Problem Solving

Understanding interconnected systems strengthens critical thinking and supports effective, sustainable solutions to complex challenges.

- Meadows, D. H. (2008). *Thinking in systems: A primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing. <https://chelseagreen.com/book/thinking-in-systems/>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2018). *Preparing our youth for an inclusive and sustainable world: The OECD global competence framework*. <https://www.oecd.org/education/global-competence/>
- Sterling, S. (2012). *The future fit framework: An introductory guide to teaching and learning for sustainability in HE*. Higher Education Academy. <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/future-fit-framework>



This model brings together current research on youth development, social-emotional learning, and real-world learning to support meaningful, youth-centered experiences across diverse contexts.