

Increasing Social Capital through Culturally Relevant Positive Youth Development (PYD)

<p>What is social capital?</p>	<p>Social capital can be described in many ways, yet the major premise is the same. Social capital is the network of relationships that increase access to privilege (Bourdieu, 1986). Privilege in this case can mean the advantages of new relationships and connections that serve as a bridge or link to enhanced life skills and opportunity. Privilege also can include development programs that increase youth civic and community involvement and advantages. .</p> <p>Social capital also can be described as “the web of cooperative relationships between members of a community that allows them to act collectively to solve problems together” (Chazdon, Allen, Horntvedt & Scheffert, 2013, p. 1).</p> <p>Calvert, Emery and Kinsey (2013) describe social capital as including trust, engagement, connections, networks and agencies. The authors further dissect social networks into:</p> <p>(a) Bonding networks help people ‘get by’. These networks consist of close ties that offer a sense of identity and security, usually with family, friends, and neighbors. (Catts & Ozga, 2005);</p> <p>(b) Bridging networks are weaker ties that can help people get ahead and gain opportunities by widening the social network (i.e. community volunteers, mentors and employers); and</p> <p>(c) Linking networks consist of organizations and systems that can help people gain resources and bring about change (i.e. universities and community organizations) (Calvert, Emery, & Kinsey, 2013).</p>
<p>What is social injustice?</p>	<p>Social injustice describes societal inequities that marginalize groups by diminishing access to quality education and other human rights (Fields & Nathaniel, 2015a). For example, in school systems, children of color are: overrepresented in special education, disproportionately expelled from school, and expected to alter their</p>

	<p>cultural norms to assimilate to standardized expectations (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Whiting, 2009). These factors are compounded when people of color are disconnected from the social networks and resources that can serve as a gateway out of poverty and a conduit to social justice (Calvert. M., Emery, M. & Kinsey, S., 2013; Catts & Ozga, 2005; Williams & Le Menstrel, 2013).</p>
<p>Can social capital serve as a conduit to social Justice?</p>	<p>Fields and Nathaniel (2015a) share that it is plausible to consider the value of social capital in the context of ‘solving problems’ partly attributed to social injustice. Youth that have social capital are better able to navigate and negotiate the myriad of barriers and challenges that stem from social injustice (Fields & Nathaniel, 2015a). This ability is due in part to having stronger community connections and reliable, stronger adult allies.</p> <p>Access to social capital, however, “is not equally available to all members of society of a given community” (Calvert. M., Emery, M. & Kinsey, S., 2013, p.5). In fact, some youth lack the social capital necessary to thrive in adulthood.</p>
<p>Why is social capital relevant to PYD?</p>	<p>It is possible for national youth development organizations such as 4-H Positive Youth Development (PYD) to incorporate social capital as an intentional outcome of its program (Fields & Nathaniel, 2015a). Researchers have conceptualized the constructs that make up social capital in several ways (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 2000). The University of Minnesota Center for Community Vitality identified concepts that are appropriate for community and youth development (see Figure 1.) (Chazdon, Allen, Horntvedt & Scheffert, 2013).</p>

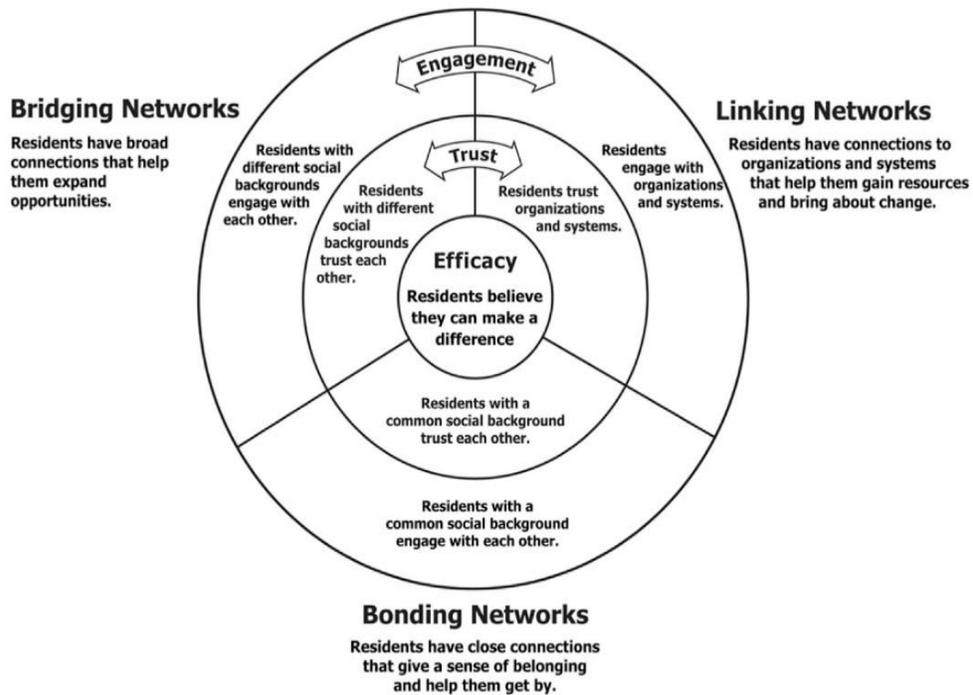


Figure 1. University of Minnesota social capital educational model

Juxtaposing the 4-H Essential Elements and Social Capital Educational Model shows clear connections. Hennes (2015) states that (a) positive relationships with a caring adult; (b) a safe emotional and physical environment; (c) an inclusive environment; and (d) the opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future contribute to a young person’s social capital. These elements relate to the social capital conditions of: (a) bonding networks that give a sense of belonging; (b) bridging networks that expand social networks and help one get ahead; and (c) linking networks that create links with organizations and systems to help gain resources and bring about change (Chazdon, Allen, Horntvedt & Scheffert, 2013; Hennes, 2015). Chazdon, Allen, Horntvedt & Scheffert (2013) state that the combination of these conditions can lead to a person’s efficacy—the belief that they can make a difference.

What is Culturally

Gloria Ladson-Billings conceptualized culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). CRP is “a pedagogy of opposition [that is] committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment” (Ladson-Billing, 1995, p. 160). ‘Collective empowerment’ means

<p>Relevant PYD?</p>	<p>moving toward social justice (Fields & Nathaniel, 2015a). This pedagogy rests on three criteria that student must</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) experience academic success; (2) develop and/or maintain cultural competence; (3) acquire a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). <p>The third criterion supports an environment where youth realize that social injustice does exist and that they have the power to challenge it. Community driven PYD programs can address social injustice and inequity in schools by providing systematic and sequentially developed opportunities that draw on the youths' cultural formations (Perry, 2003; Erbstein, 2013).</p> <p>Erbstein (2013) states that “effective outreach to marginalized youth [relies] on locally grounded, culturally specific understandings” of those youth (p. 111). Erbstein (2013) expounds on this idea by sharing key components of a culturally relevant PYD: (a) engaging adult allies; (b) respect, care, and high expectations; (c) a critical stance toward systems; (d) communication; and (e) shared culture, language, and experience. Williams (2001) affirms that “youth development practitioners may have to increase their knowledge base of different cultures to begin the journey to accomplishing cross-cultural competence so programs may be designed for cultural inclusion of diverse youth and volunteers” (para. 16).</p> <p>A color-blind and culture-blind understanding of PYD [and its constructs] can disadvantage youths who are most affected by social injustice (Erbstein, 2013; Spencer, 2008). To achieve the intended outcomes of PYD, program efforts must include culturally relevant pedagogy and critical experiential practices (Erbstein, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Perry, Steele & Hilliard; 2003).</p>
<p>What are ways that PYD can contribute to social capital?</p>	<p>In a study (citation should go here rather than at end of list) of social capital of 4-H youth in California and Maryland, researchers found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth who engage in community service projects tend to have higher degrees of social capital than other youths; • There is a correlation between the relationship of a caring adult and a young person's degree of social capital. • Youth who had more trusting relationships – in particular, the bonding trust in families, friends and neighbors – had higher degrees of social capital. • If youth have healthy relationships with adults in their community and are engaged in community service projects, there is a higher level of social capital.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-H youth felt they could make a difference in their communities and had a sense of belonging to different social networks (Enfield & Nathaniel, 2013; Fields & Nathaniel, 2015b; Harris, 2015).
<p>What are some research tools that can be used to measure social capital in PYD?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community mapping can show the depth and breadth of social capital and how the various connections are interdependent and simultaneously distinct (Nathaniel & Kinsey, 2013). • Community mapping and spiraling-Up: Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework, <i>Journal of Community Development Society</i> (Emery & Flora, 2006). • Community Capitals Toolkit for Kids can be used for reflecting, evaluating, and planning collaborative actions with youth & volunteers.
<p>Where can I find additional social capital resources?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of 4-H Participation to the Development of Social Capital within Communities: Multi-state research study NCERA215 • Youth Programs as Builders of Social Capital: New Directions for Youth Development • Journal article: Our Role in and Responsibility Toward Social Justice • Ripple Mapping Videos
<p>Where can I find additional resources on culturally relevant programming?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal article: But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. • Culturally Relevant Program and Professional Development: Mentors of Minorities in Education, Inc. • Latino Youth Outreach: Best Practices Toolkit • Culturally Responsive 4-H Youth Development in Southeast Alaska • Ready-to-Go Mentor Training Kit: Explores issues of cultural competence, personal values, and issues of privilege

Nia Imani Fields, University of Maryland Extension 4-H Educator

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Nia Imani Fields

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