

## 6 Ways to Know If Your Program Prioritizes Relationships

Youth facing organizations have long recognized that prioritizing relationships are essential components of work that produces valuable outcomes for youth. Search Institute, researchers have found that although many youth facing organizations believe that they are making relationships a priority, in actuality many organizations make them a lower priority than such things as curricula or program content.

In order to assess the priority organizations give relationships, Dr. Kent Pekel, President and CEO of Search Institute, has developed a quick 6-question assessment to evaluate your own organization's efforts to put relationships first.

Here are the 6 questions:

### 1. Time

Is there dedicated time to building relationships with and among youth?  
Do you make time for your staff to plan those relationship building strategies?

### 2. Staff

Are relationships part of the evaluation process when staff is hired or volunteers come on board?  
Are they part of the yearly assessment and promotion process?

### 3. Budget

Are financial resources dedicated to prioritizing relationships over non-relationship expenses?

### 4. Training or Professional Development

Are relationships an ongoing focus of professional development or capacity building in your organization?  
Have you held a workshop, seminar or staff meeting with the primary focus of improving relationships in your practice?

### 5. Data

Do you have any quantitative (such as from a survey (<https://www.search-institute.org/surveys/>)) or qualitative (from interviews or focus groups) data on how kids experience relationships in your organization?

### 6. Definition

Have you defined the kinds of relationships you want to build with and among young people?  
Do you have a vision for how those relationships fit into your organization?

For more information visit the Search Institute [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)