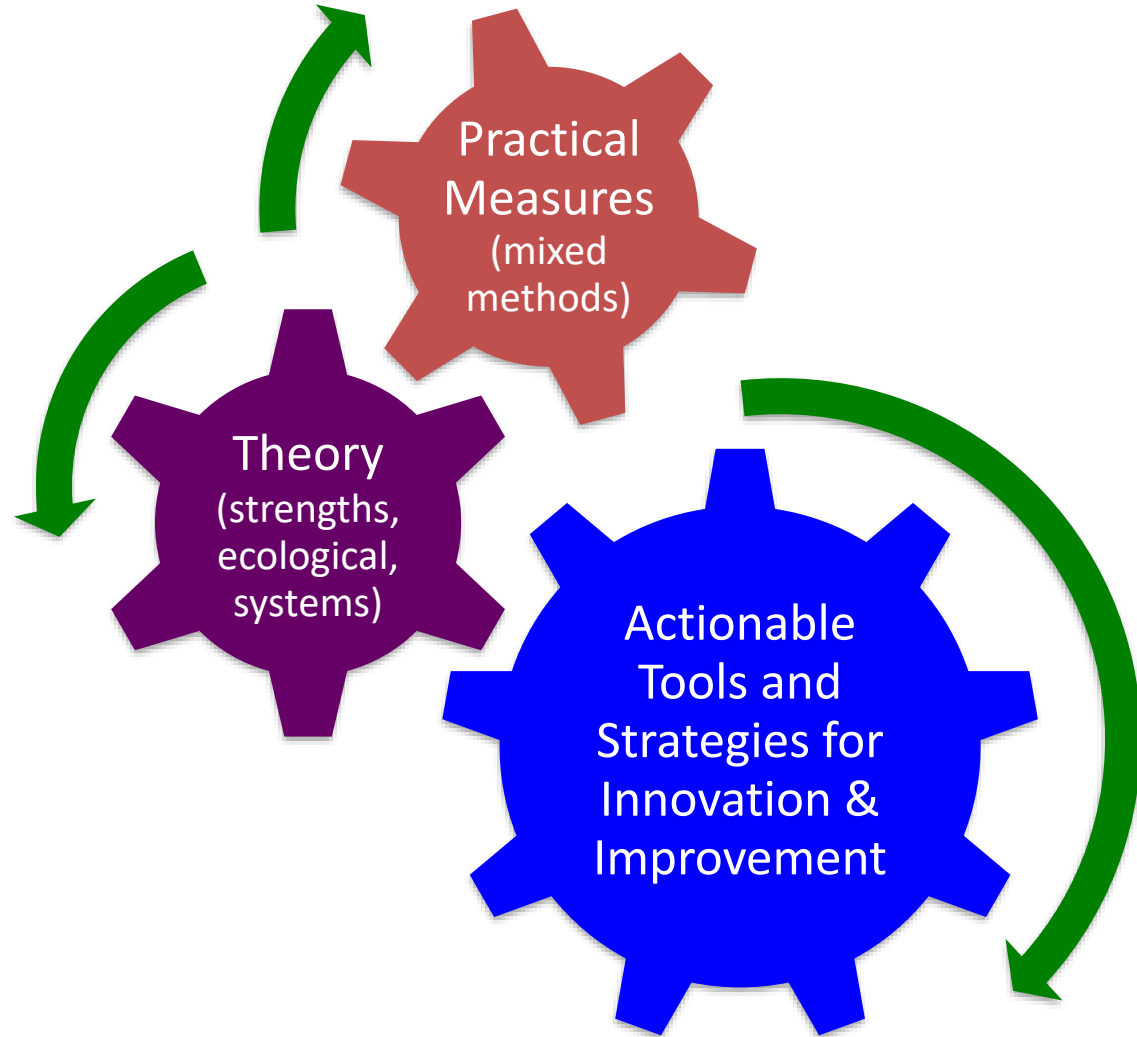




# DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

*Bridging research and practice  
to help young people be and  
become their best selves*

[www.searchinstitute.org](http://www.searchinstitute.org)



# (Some) Elements of Enabling Environments

Political  
Environment

Health  
Environment

Economic  
Environment



Developmental & Relational Environment

Educational  
Environment

Civic  
Environment

Service  
Environment

# The Active Ingredient



“The **effectiveness** of child-serving programs, practices, and policies is **determined first and foremost by whether they strengthen or weaken developmental relationships**. . . . When this type of relationship is not available or is diluted, interventions show limited effects.”

— Junlei Li & Megan Julian

Li, J., & Julian, M. M. (2012). Developmental relationships as the active ingredient: a unifying working hypothesis of “what works” across intervention settings. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 82(2), 157–66.

“Whether the **burdens** come from the hardships of poverty, the challenges of parental substance abuse or serious mental illness, the stresses of war, the threats of recurrent violence or chronic neglect, or a combination of factors, the **single most common finding** is that children who end up doing well have had at least one **stable and committed relationship** with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.”

— National Scientific Council on the Developing Child

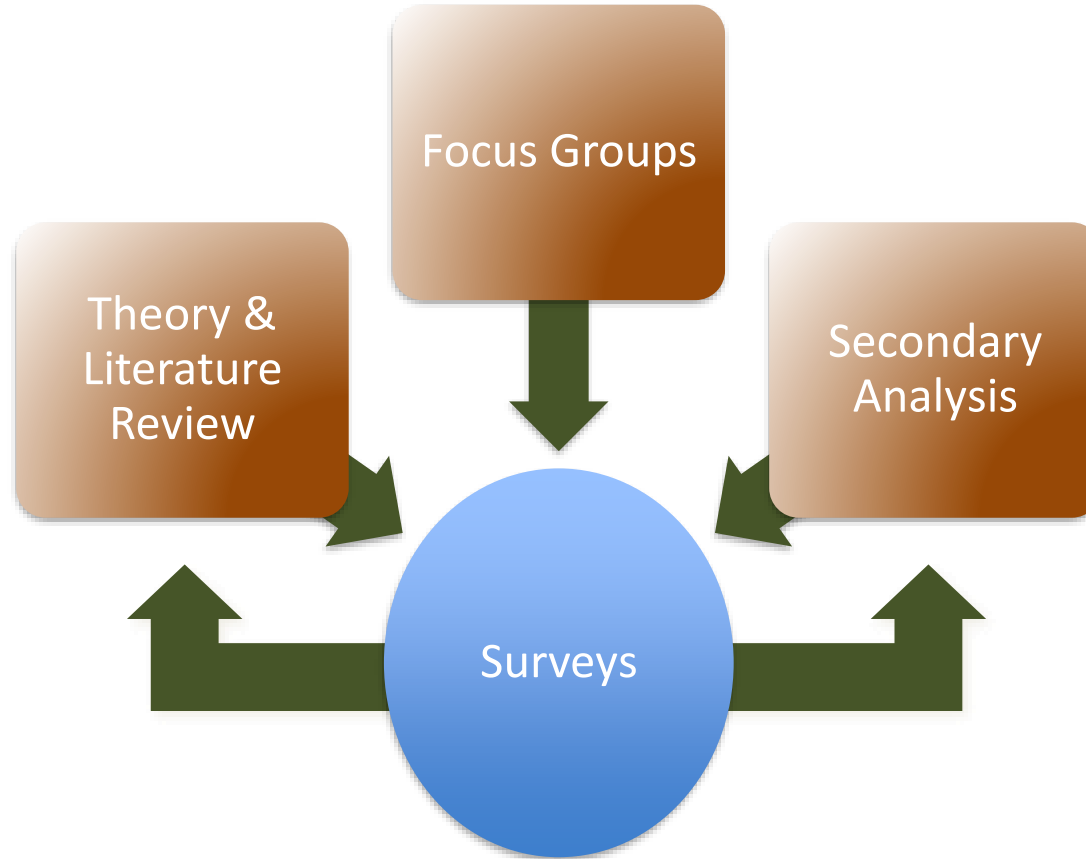
Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2015). *Supportive relationships and active skill-building strengthen the foundations of resilience: Working Paper No. 13*. Retrieved from [www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu).



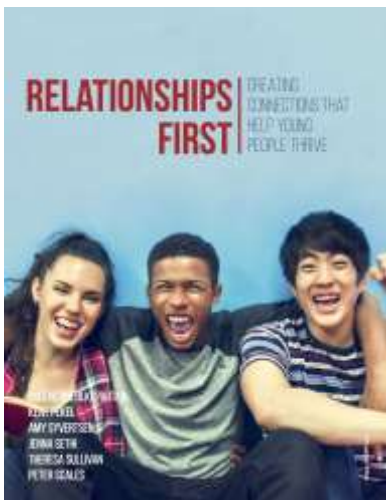
# But What Makes Relationships Strong?



# Investigating Relationships



# Developmental Relationships



Express  
Care

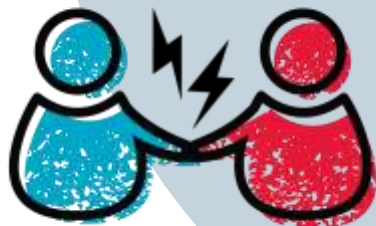


Challenge  
Growth



Provide  
Support

Connections that help  
young people be and  
become their best  
selves.



Share Power



Expand  
Possibilities



# Relevance for Your Contexts/Programs

## **CHECK (✓)**

Actions that are relevant to the contexts in which you work as they are currently articulated.

## **CROSS OUT (X)**

Actions that are not relevant (or are inappropriate) in the contexts in which you work

## **EDIT**

Highlight words or concepts that would need to be adapted or changed to be relevant.

## **ADD**

Write in other actions or topics that would need to be included for this framework to adequately capture the dynamics of relationships in the environments in which you work



**One way you could see  
this framework adding  
value to your work**

- Opportunities to learn, test (p. 5)

## In the meantime . . .

- Insights and challenges from implementation  
Kristin Brady, FHI 360
- Insights and challenges from measurement  
Nikhil D'Sa, Save the Children