

# Guiding Principles for Building Soft Skills Among Adolescents and Young Adults

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# Introduction

- Consensus that youth soft skills are critical to multiple development outcomes.
- Research indicating that soft skills are not fixed, but malleable.
- *School-based, out-of-school, and workplace-based* interventions expanded globally.
- Diverse landscape of programmatic contexts and youth characteristics

# Research Questions:

Are there *common principles* that have proven successful in developing soft skills across different types of programs, target populations, and clusters of soft skills?

How are these principles translated into effective practice through various program modalities in diverse settings?

# Process for Identifying Guiding Principles

**Step 1:** Extensive review of recent synthesis literature

**Step 2:** Inclusion criteria:

- Targeted youth aged 12-29
- Addressed at least one of the 7 key cross-cutting soft skills identified by YP Action
- Synthesized recommendations on soft skills development

**Step 3:** Summarization and analysis of the main findings

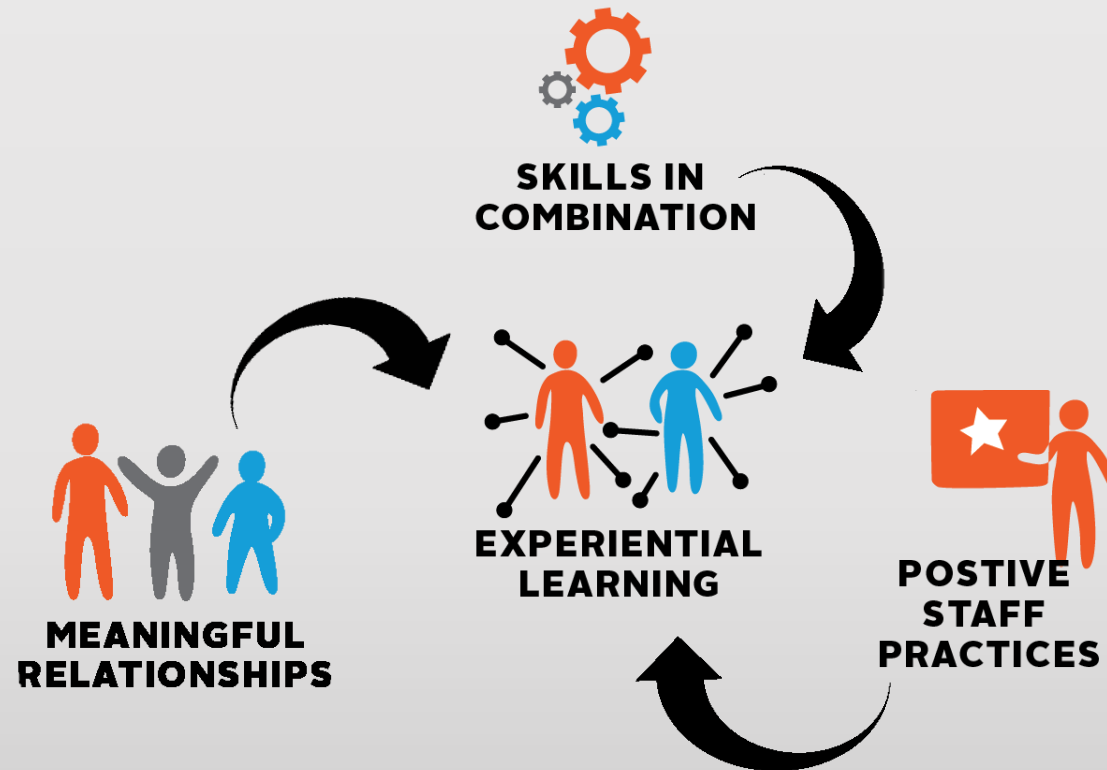
## INTEGRATION ACROSS CONTEXTS

 Home

 Work

 Community

 School



**SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

# Strategies - Promote Positive Staff Practices



Develop Staffs Soft Skill Competencies  
*Sharing Power And Giving Youth A Say*  
**Confidence**  
*Positive Reinforcement*  
*Facilitation And Questioning*  
**Collaborative Setting Of Program Rules**  
**Modeling** *Norms*  
*Counseling Based On Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*  
**Feedback** *Scaffolding*

# Strategies - Promote Experiential Learning



Storytelling  
Personal reflection  
**role plays**  
Internships & apprenticeships  
Project based learning  
Skill demonstration  
simulations Sports  
Outdoor adventures  
debate games  
Performing arts  
Community service

# Strategies - Promote integration of learning contexts

 Home

 Work  Community  School

Informational Meetings  
Task Forces And Advisory Boards  
Support Services  
Linkages To Adult Education  
Soft Skills Workshops  
**TAKE HOME MATERIALS**

School community advisory boards  
Internships  
Field trips  
Service learning  
**GUEST SPEAKERS AND MENTORSHIP**  
Workplace tours



# Design, Implementation and Evaluation Challenges

- Culture shifts: organizational and regional
- Resources & incentives to enable these shifts to occur
- Tailoring programming for youth level of risk
- Scaling both in- and outside of education systems
- More evaluation of program intervention types with various youth populations
- More longitudinal research & evaluation with longer-term follow-up

# Final Thought

**Use the 6 principles to guide your youth project design!**

- Which (combination of) skills?  
How? Who needs to be engaged? Where?



FHI 360