



Social Capital Survey Guide

Explore actionable data on relational climates, social capital, and social networks.

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Social Capital Survey gives schools and youth and young adult-serving organizations a research-based, valid and reliable assessment of social capital, networks, and progress toward education and career outcomes. This survey will bring actionable data and insight to your school or organization. Measuring the effectiveness of supporting young people's social capital development is the first step to being able to implement the solutions young people need to become their best selves.

HIGHLIGHTS

- For youth and emerging adults (grades 6 and above)
- Spanish version is coming soon
- Adult (staff) version is available free of charge for certain modules
- Audio narration available (in English)
- Additional modules to help you meet your measurement interests
- Bring in youth voice and learn from the perspectives of young people themselves
- Inform your actions and guide you in proactive and focused planning to increase positive outcomes

RECOMMENDED USERS:

- Education and workforce development programs
- Middle and high schools
- Mentoring programs
- Post-secondary institutions





THE MODULES

Core Modules

MODULE #1: Relationship-Rich Climate

Search Institute studies and research-practice partnerships consistently suggest a relational climate defined as intentional, inclusive, and equitable is ideal for supporting young people in strengthening their web of support (i.e., social capital).

MODULE #2: Social Capital

Search Institute defines social capital as the resources arising from a web of developmental relationships that young people can activate and mobilize as they pursue life goals. The social capital domain includes a social capital measure and the strength and diversity of a young person's social network.

Additional Modules

MODULE #3: Mindsets & Skills For Social Capital Growth

To effectively use social capital to reach one's education or career goals, young people need the mindsets and skills to successfully activate and mobilize relationships and resources in pursuit of their goals. This module captures mindsets and skills that are shown to be critical factors in doing so.

MODULE #4: Progress Towards Education And Career Outcomes

Many organizations and programs focused on social capital hope to advance young people's progress towards reaching their education and/or career goals, while also inspiring and creating space for young people to do the same for others.

Staff Social Capital Survey

In addition to a social capital survey designed for young people, there is also an optional staff survey available. The Staff Social Capital Survey includes measures to better understand how your organization and staff that work directly with young people support them in building social capital and a web of supportive relationships.



CORE MODULE #1:

Relationship-Rich Climate

This section of the survey measures how young people experience the relational climate at your organization and the extent to which the organization connects them with other important relationships in their lives (i.e., brokering connections).

Search Institute’s research has shown that young people who perceive a strong relationship-rich climate and feel that their school or organization does a good job at connecting them with other important relationships also tend to report higher levels of social capital and more progress toward their goals.

MEASURES	EXAMPLE	QUESTIONS	EST. TIME
RELATIONSHIP-RICH CLIMATE A relationship-rich climate refers to the social atmosphere or general “feel” of what it’s like to be in a particular setting.	<i>[Org Name] creates a safe space for me to express who I am and who I want to be.</i>	7 questions	3 minutes
BROKERING CONNECTIONS The extent to which an individual perceives that the organization they are part of connects them with other important relationships in their lives (e.g., peers, family members)	<i>[Org Name] helps me connect with my family.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes

To see a detailed view of this module, click [here](#).



CORE MODULE #2:

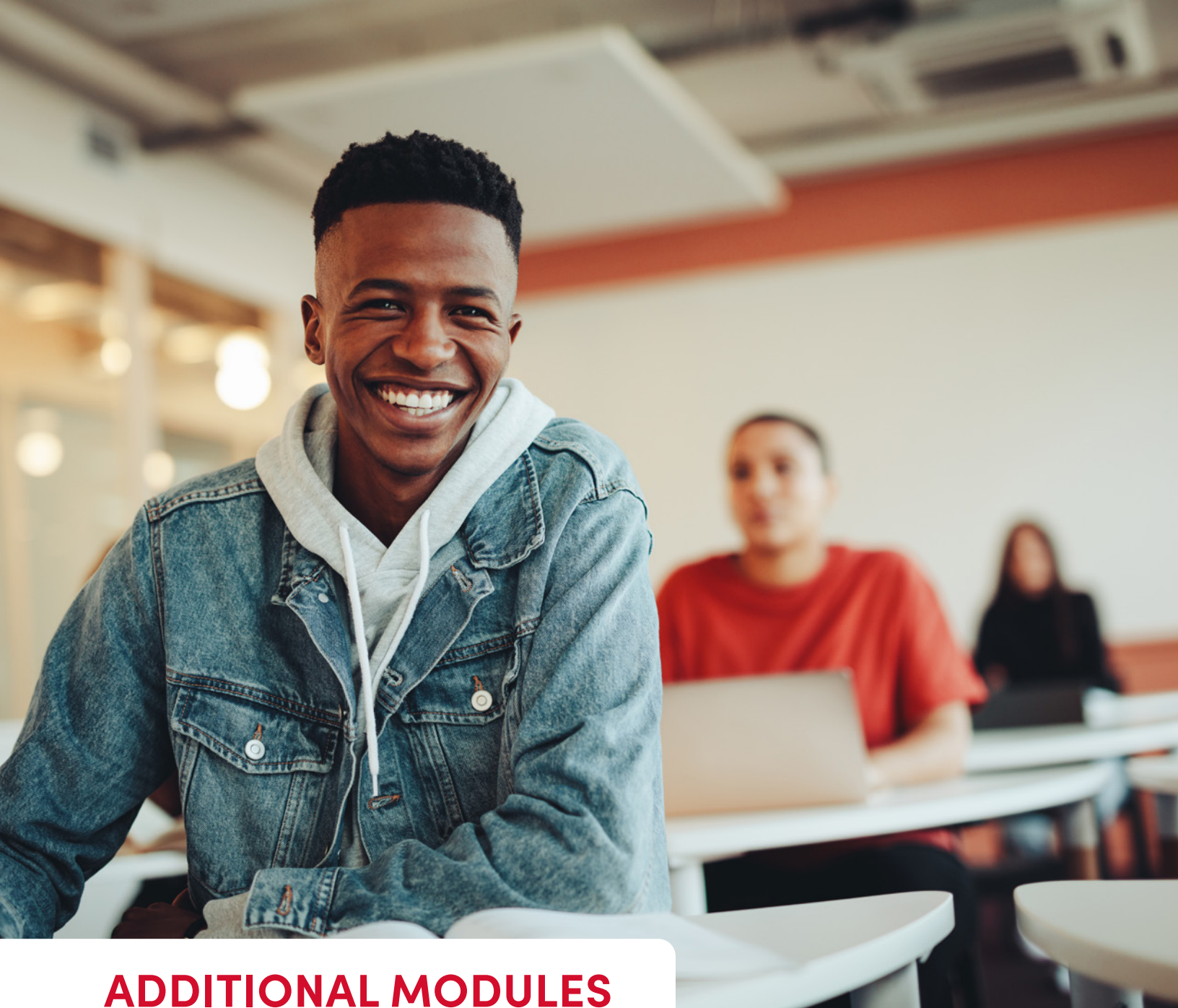
Social Capital

This section of the survey measures young people’s web of supportive relationships by capturing how young people experience relationships across a group of different relational targets and whether or not these relationships are developmental and provide access to useful resources or opportunities. The relational targets are determined and customized by you to ensure the language in the survey aligns with your organization (e.g., teachers, program staff, mentors). In addition, this module also captures the strength and diversity of a young person’s social network.

Search Institute’s research shows that when relationships are developmental and provide access to useful resources, they serve a critical role in helping young people reach their life goals. Just as a system of roots supports and nourishes trees as they develop and grow, nurturing relationships can provide a foundation for youth development by offering guidance, encouragement, and new opportunities.

MEASURES	EXAMPLE	QUESTIONS	EST. TIME
SOCIAL CAPITAL The degree to which an individual has a strong web of supportive relationships, which includes developmental relationships and the resources provided from and through these relationships.	<i>[Relational Target] introduces me to new experiences or opportunities.</i>	9 questions	3 minutes per relational target
NETWORK STRENGTH The degree to which an individual has a strong network of relationships is characterized by having individuals whom they can go to for help, and trust, and who are influential in providing valuable resources and support.	<i>I have people in my network that I can trust to help me pursue my education or career goals.</i>	6 questions	2 minutes
NETWORK DIVERSITY The degree to which an individual has a diverse network of relationships (e.g., different cultures, racial/ethnic and economic backgrounds).	<i>I have people in my network with different skills that will be useful to me as I pursue my goals.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes

To see a detailed view of this module, click [here](#).



ADDITIONAL MODULES

The modules listed in this section are optional and are available to you as a means to customize the survey to best align with your work and meet your measurement needs. These modules draw from Search Institute’s research studies and provide additional flexibility for you to make this survey your own. We recommend that you strike a balance between measuring what is important to you without overburdening your young people with a lengthy survey. Ensure that whatever measures you choose fit within the time you have allotted for survey administration.



OPTIONAL MODULE #3:

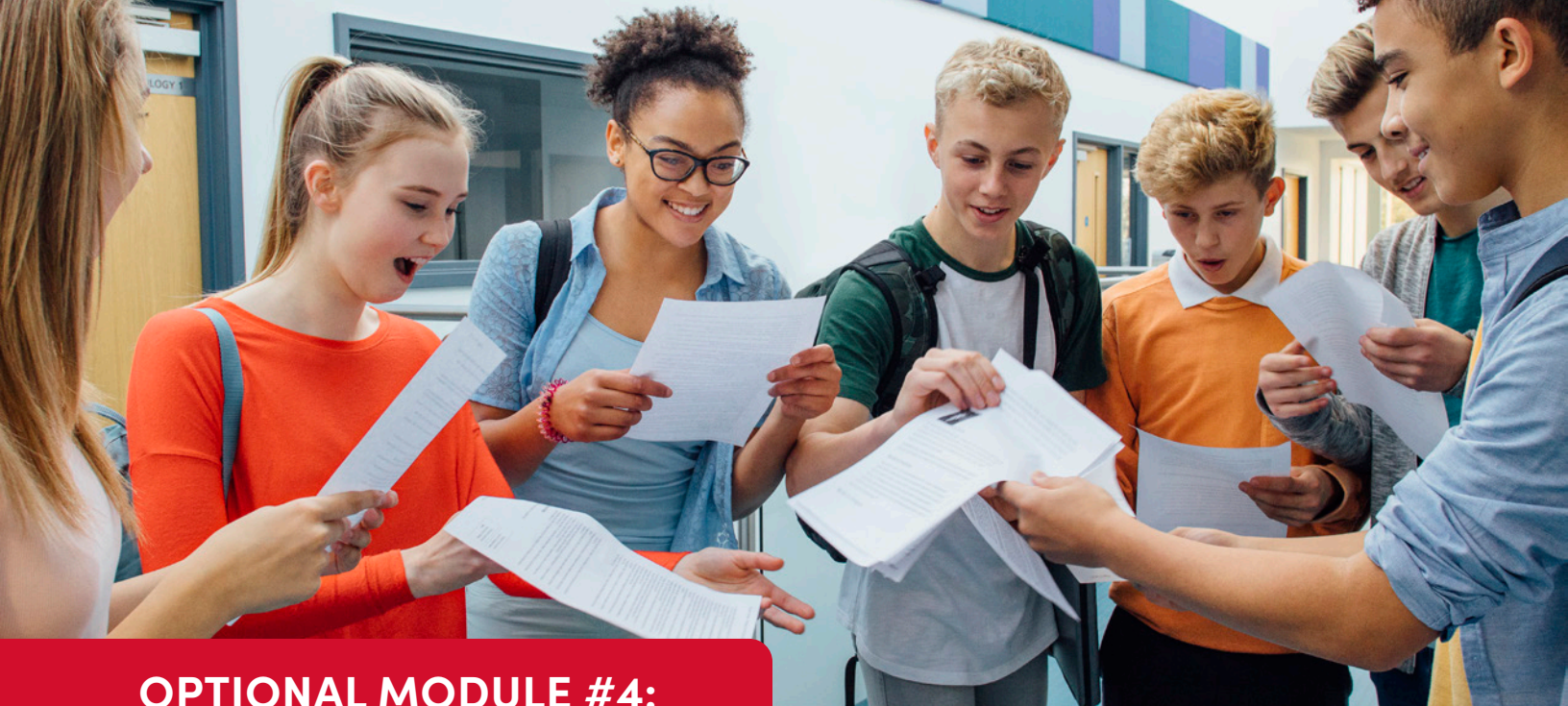
Mindsets and Skills for Social Capital Growth

The mindsets and skills for the social capital growth module capture different skills and mindsets that our research shows to be critical to strengthening social capital and leveraging social capital to reach one’s life goals. Four key domains are captured in this module: relational mindset, relationship-building skills, networking skills, and relational agency.

ADDITIONAL MEASURE OPTIONS

MEASURES	EXAMPLE	QUESTIONS	EST. TIME
RELATIONAL MINDSET The degree to which an individual believes it is important to build a web of supportive relationships that can support them as they work towards their life goals.	<i>It is useful to have a network of people who can advocate for me.</i>	6 questions	2 minutes
RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING SKILLS The degree to which an individual can build positive relationships with others.	<i>I work well with others in a group or team.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
NETWORKING SKILLS The degree to which an individual has the skills to build new connections.	<i>I use my current network to meet new people.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
RELATIONAL AGENCY The degree to which an individual actively builds relationships and uses the relationships and the resources they have to reach their goals.	<i>I ask others for help when working towards my education or career goals.</i>	6 questions	2 minutes

To see a detailed view of this module, click [here](#).



OPTIONAL MODULE #4:

Progress Towards Education and Career Outcomes

The progress towards education and career outcomes module captures different outcomes that social capital has been shown to have an impact on. Three key domains are captured in this module: commitment to paying it forward, progress toward education and career goals, and self-efficacy in reaching life goals.

ADDITIONAL MEASURE OPTIONS

MEASURES	EXAMPLE	QUESTIONS	EST. TIME
COMMITMENT TO PAYING-IT-FORWARD The degree to which an individual engages in behaviors that demonstrate a commitment to paying it forward to others.	<i>I pass on my knowledge and skills to others.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
PROGRESS TOWARDS EDUCATION AND CAREER GOALS The degree to which an individual reports making progress towards their education or career goals.	<i>I have already taken important steps towards pursuing my education or career goals.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
SELF-EFFICACY IN REACHING LIFE GOALS The extent to which an individual believes they can successfully reach their life goals.	<i>I can achieve the goals that I have set for myself.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes

To see a detailed view of this module, click [here](#).

Staff Social Capital Survey

Youth and young adults receive support for strengthening and building social capital through several means including the support that they receive from you. Organizations can create the necessary supporting structures and climate needed for young people to develop strong relationships within the organization. Staff within the organization also have specific mindsets and skills that can help support young people in building their web of supportive relationships. Therefore, we developed a staff survey to capture how organizations and their staff support the young people they serve.

ADDITIONAL MEASURE OPTIONS

MEASURES	EXAMPLE	QUESTIONS	EST. TIME
SUPPORTING STRUCTURES Organizational supporting structures are needed to create a relationship-rich climate.	<i>[Org Name] sets and communicates clear expectations that staff build positive relationships with young people.</i>	6 questions	2 minutes
RELATIONSHIP-RICH CLIMATE The extent to which the organization is perceived as relationship-rich. A relationship-rich climate refers to the social atmosphere or general “feel” of what it's like to be in a particular setting.	<i>[Org Name] creates a safe space for young people to express who they are and who they want to be.</i>	7 questions	3 minutes
BROKERING CONNECTIONS The extent to which the organization connects young people with other important relationships in their lives (e.g., peers, family members).	<i>[Org Name] helps young people build and maintain strong relationships with others.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
SOCIAL CAPITAL SUPPORT The degree to which staff support young people's social capital development by building strong developmental relationships and providing access to resources to the young people they work with.	<i>I provide young people with useful information for pursuing their education or career goals.</i>	9 questions	3 minutes
RELATIONAL MINDSETS The degree to which staff believes it is important to support young people in building a web of supportive relationships.	<i>Supporting young people in building positive relationships is critical to achieving our mission.</i>	5 questions	2 minutes
RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING SKILLS The extent to which staff have the skills to build positive relationships with all young people.	<i>I tailor my approach to building relationships with each person I serve, based on their unique needs.</i>	4 questions	2 minutes
BROKERING SKILLS The extent to which staff help connect young people with others and opportunities aligned with their life goals.	<i>I connect young people with opportunities that match their interests.</i>	5 questions	2 minutes

To see a detailed view of this survey, click [here](#).

About Search Institute

Search Institute is an independent, nonprofit, nonsectarian organization whose mission is to advance the well-being of children and youth by generating knowledge and promoting its application. The institute collaborates with others to promote long-term organizational and cultural change that supports its mission.



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