

Social Capital and Professional Development of Youth

*If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go with others.*

-- African Proverb

What is Capital and its Different Forms?



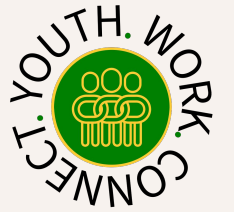
- CAPITAL is anything you possess that has value that can be used to acquire other things of value
- Examples include:
 - **HUMAN CAPITAL** - education and skills – allows you to perform job tasks, volunteer services, entertain and other activities in exchange for pay and / or personal satisfaction
 - **FINANCIAL CAPITAL** - access to money – allows you to purchase an asset (a car, a house), start a business, support a friend or relative and other activities in exchange for personal needs, financial gain, or personal satisfaction
 - **SOCIAL CAPITAL** - a network of people who can help you – gives you access to more opportunities and broader knowledge to get a job, better health care, emotional support and other benefits

So, what is Social Capital and its Different Forms?



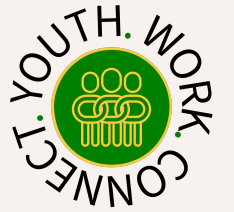
- Social capital can be thought of as positive relationships that bring mutual value to yourself and to those you live in community with.
 - *“We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men ...”* – Herman Melville
- There are two primary forms of social capital and both are important:
 - **BONDING Social Capital** is the network of positive relationships with family and close friends often from the same community and background
 - **BRIDGING Social Capital** is the network of positive relationships with people who you may not know as well and are often from different communities and backgrounds

Why focus on social capital for the professional development of youth?



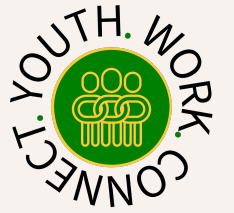
- While not the only thing needed by youth to choose and grow into a career, social capital is important because, among other things, it increases the odds of finding satisfying work.
- It is based on the principal that "it's not what you know but who you know" that makes a difference in finding, keeping, and enjoying a job.
- Building social capital is about expanding the network of "who you know" throughout each phase of the professional growth process - from career exploration to becoming a successful employee, leader, or entrepreneur
- BRIDGING Social Capital is particularly important as it gives you access to a much wider network of people to communicate with and learn from

Relationships and the Strength of Ties



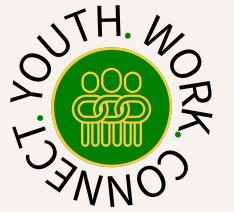
- You might think that when it comes to relationships Strong = Good and Weak = Poor
 - But that is not how it works! All Positive Relationships, whether they are Strong or Weak, are Good
- **Strong ties** are bonds with the people you know best – close family members and close friends.
 - These relationships can help you in many ways and they are people you can rely on for emotional support and personal advice
- **Weak ties** are bonds with people you don't know as well. You may have met them only once, or many times, but they are still more like acquaintances.
 - These are the people who can help you with objective advice and referrals such as college recommendations or finding a job

How do you Develop Bridging Social Capital?



- Bridging Social Capital can come from both Strong ties and Weak ties but it is more likely that they are Weak ties
- NETWORKING is the way to build and strengthen relationships
 - You increase the size of your community!
 - You get to know different types of people
 - You increase the strength of your relationships
- Networking is not a one-way street
 - You can help others and others can help you

How Can Adult Allies Help Youth Build Social Capital?



- Be willing to share your experiences and perspectives in an objective way if asked for information or advice about college or career options
- Be willing to refer youth to others who might be able to give a different perspectives or a greater amount of information about a topic of particular interest
- In work environments (paid and unpaid), introduce them to others or allow them to work on projects with others
- Offer to write a recommendation if the they did good work on the job or volunteering
- Connect with them on LinkedIn

Social Capital is About Building Community



- The great thing about building social capital it's not a one-way street
 - The person that shares their social capital does not lose any of their own, and the person who gains social capital has more to share with others
- Building social capital is about building communities that help everyone

"Alone, we can do so little; together we can do so much." -- Helen Keller