

## Students Tell Us How to Increase Their Motivation and Achievement

The Search Institute has found that strong relationships with teachers translates to higher motivation and better school achievement. But relationships are so common that they are often taken for granted and don't happen intentionally to enough young people. The most compelling findings of their DREAM project are:

- Students and teachers rate their relationships very differently.
- Relationship quality and motivation typically go down or stay flat across the school year.
- Strong relationships, and improvements in relationships over the school year, predict significantly better motivation, perceptions of school climate and grades/test scores.
- The strong link of relationships and educational outcomes happens across student differences in sex, race, ethnicity and economic background.

These **concrete tips from youth** are easy to work into our daily practice as professionals and parents:

### Express Care – ***this is foundational to all other relationship elements***

- Have a positive attitude; be willing to make (and take) a joke; not be too serious unless necessary
- Really get to know us; not just name, grade or issues
- Wipe the slate clean every day; don't hold a grudge
- Share your life stories, successes and challenges

### Challenge Growth

- Set clear, consistent and high expectations for all
- Motivate to always do our best
- Create opportunities to learn from mistakes; second chances are important
- Admit when you make mistakes

### Provide Support

- Hang in there during tough times; don't give up on us
- Find creative ways to success
- Be flexible
- Practice compassion and empathy

### Share Power

- Give choices and opportunities to be part of decision making
- Act on suggestions from children and youth
- Put us on "same level"
- Take the expert hat off; you don't have to know everything

### Expand Possibilities

- Connect us to opportunities in school, yet outside of classroom
- Connect us with opportunities outside of school or community

Relationships are the root system for all child and youth success. For more information or to watch the DREAM project webinar, visit [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)