



CIVIL AIR PATROL
CADET PROGRAMS

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GLOSSARY

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Helpful terms &
how they apply to
the Cadet Program



INTRODUCTION

It's difficult to discuss a topic and learn about it if you lack the words to do so. Acquire a technical vocabulary and suddenly complex ideas easily enter the conversation. Intractable problems become solvable because the right words are available for work. This glossary aims to equip the cadet community with common terminology for professional growth. Definitions for each term are drawn from today's scholarship.

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1. POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Young people don't merely have potential to achieve something in the future, they can make a difference now. PYD's main idea is to recognize that young people already possess strengths and capabilities. Therefore, we should intentionally give youth opportunities to flex those strengths. While not fully mature, even children possess "developmental assets" that, if nurtured and cultivated, can grow stronger and unlock even more capabilities. Within the youth program space (e.g., CAP, Scouting, 4-H, clubs, etc.) PYD has become the dominant paradigm.

PYD is a strengths-based model. It's meant to replace the "storm-and-stress" view of adolescence. In earlier generations, youth were often viewed as problems to managed. Youth programs were designed to solve particular problems, to correct deficiencies – a teen pregnancy reduction program, a juvenile delinquency program, a drug resistance program, etc.

Thanks partly to youth-serving professionals in the field (teachers, coaches, Scout leaders, club advisors, etc.), researchers began to understand one of youth work's most quoted maxims: "Problem free is not fully prepared." Instead of reacting to kids' deficiencies, we ought to intentionally build-up their skills, knowledge, and core beliefs, beginning with whatever capabilities each individual already possesses.

Researchers took that wisdom from frontline youth workers and combined it with new science from comparative psychology and evolutionary biology that revealed that young people have a "plasticity" enabling them to bounce-back and change to a greater extent than adults who are set in their ways. Accordingly, PYD looks at young people – even youth who are really struggling – as already possessing certain strengths that they can use to grow and develop still more strengths.

CAP Context. We are not trying to correct a social malady (teen pregnancy, underage drinking, school truancy, etc.) but to build-up the potential of young people who are attracted to the cadet lifestyle. We'll admit into the program any young person who meets basic age and citizenship criteria, with only the rarest exceptions.

Frontline people in the squadrons know from experience that even a 12-year-old Cadet Airman Basic has something to contribute to the squadron. Maybe

there's a sense of self-discipline already present, a kindness to teammates, a respectful habit of listening to adults and role models. We build upon those "developmental assets." That's PYD.

Program goals in our PYD organization focus on how well we develop our enrolled youth: to what extent do we develop leadership skills, instill the Core Values, and build knowledge about and enthusiasm for aerospace?

2. FADING

Fading is an intentional act on the part of an adult leader to reduce their use of direct instruction and control over youth who are maturing in their leadership skill. As youth skills increase, the instructional and/or supervisory *scaffolding* is gradually reduced to allow a greater degree of autonomy, youth voice, and authentic decision making to occur.

Through fading, adults share power with youth by acting more as facilitators and standby advisors than bosses providing close supervision or teachers who provide direct instruction and are the sole fount of wisdom.

Employed properly, fading is a calibrated, intentional act. Fading is not the surrender of all control and decision-making, nor does fading equate to abandoning teens to their imperfect adolescent wisdom.

CAP Context. CAP's best tools for helping adult leaders calibrate their fading techniques are arguably cadet cadre position descriptions. They define the cadets' roles and responsibilities, carefully limiting their scope in a crawl, walk, run manner. The cadet cadre's authority (their space for authentic decision making) is defined by the role in which they are currently serving. Still, position descriptions should not be used as if they were autopilot features because cadets' individual differences (maturity, intellectual and social development, self-confidence, etc.) will require adults to fine-tune their fading techniques.

Other scaffolds that facilitate proper fading include the cadet grade structure, the progressive leadership curriculum, and the minimum and maximum grade ranges for cadet cadre positions. For more on fading as a dynamic system, see "Designing a Cadet Staff Structure" and "The Changing Role of Senior Members" in Part 3 of CAPP 60-11, *The Cadet Program Officer's Handbook*.

3. ADULTISM

Adultism is a negative attribute of an adult / youth relationship. It (correctly) assumes that adults carry wisdom and experience that youth do not have, but adults use that power imbalance to dominate the relationship, versus share power with youth in the context of their youth program.

Adultism sometimes takes the form of perfectionism, with the adult being overly concerned about the style or form of youth leadership. Adultism might also take the form of an information overload, where the adult expects the youth to absorb a quantity of learning that exceeds what is reasonable, especially in *OST* settings where the program is not the youths' full-time priority. Most of all, adultism is a reluctance to relinquish power around decision making, the drowning-out of *youth voice*.

On *Hart's Ladder*, adultism is represented by the rungs of manipulation, decoration, tokenism (always), and to a lesser extent assigned but informed, consulted and informed, and adult-initiated with shared decisions. Just because adults step back, via *fading*, does not mean that they do not have the responsibility to support young people's leadership. The opposite of adultism is supportive mentoring, not abandonment.

CAP Context. Adultism is a perennial adversary affecting nearly all youth programs. In CAP, adultism is visible when adults personally direct first-year cadets without making use of the cadet chain of command. It's hogging the spotlight, dominating the conversation, constantly interjecting the adult's own personal experiences instead of prompting cadets to share theirs.

Adultism can also take the form of expecting too much too fast from cadets. For example, an adult criticizing a cadet's activity plan as not matching the military op-plan standard is adultism.

Adultism occurs when adult leaders employ *fading* too slowly or not at all. Adultism thwarts *youth voice*, *authentic decision making*, and *free choice learning*. When cadets complain they aren't being allowed to "run" their program, they are likely complaining about an excess of adultism.

4. YOUTH VOICE

Youth voice is the concept that in *out-of-school* program spaces, the preferences, viewpoints, and voices of youth participants should guide what youth

learn, as well as the how, when, and why. Habitual practice of youth voice in an OST environment is important for fulfilling youths' natural desire for autonomy, agency, and self-determination.

Authentic youth voice should not be mistaken for *pro forma* youth voice or tokenism. Indeed, older teens will be especially alert to adults asking youth for input on program goals and activity plans as a subterfuge for the adults' own plans, which defeats authentic decision making and ownership. Put another way, adults who honor youth voice and truly encourage it plan activities with youth, not for youth.

CAP Context. Cadets, especially cadet cadre, help the squadron set goals for the coming month, semester, or year. The Cadet Advisory Council program intentionally taps cadets for their perspectives on pressing real-world challenges facing their units. Even the lowest-ranking cadets should be afforded opportunity for youth voice in selecting which STEM kits they'll use in the coming quarter or which cool weekend activities the squadron should host in the near future. Where youth voice expresses the cadets' consensus, adult staff should try hard to support cadets' preferences.

5. FREE CHOICE LEARNING

Free choice learning is self-directed, voluntary, and guided by individual needs and interests. It is learning we do when we want to. Through free choice systems of learning, the learner / participant exercises a strong measure of choice over what, why, where, when, and how they will learn. Youth programs and other *OST* experiences are particularly ripe for free choice learning because OST experiences tend to be entirely voluntary, meaning that if the learning isn't fun and doesn't engage individual youths' interests, the participants can "vote with their feet" by exiting the program. Free choice learning happens mostly outside of the imposed structure and requirements of schools, universities, and workplaces, making free choice learning at once extremely interesting and chronically underrecognized.

CAP Context. The Cadet Program is a voluntary activity. While the Cadet Program is emphatically a set of structured experiences in leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character (the Cadet Program's four core elements), there are innumerable electives available to cadets within cadet life. Some cadets are drill

team cadets, others are into cyber or drones, others train for ES missions, and some cadets seem to dabble in a bit of everything.

In the future, CAP could embrace free choice learning even more by reducing the number of nonnegotiable tasks in the promotion system in favor of a menu of options and by structuring the optional activities and electives for easy-in entrance and easy-out exit, allowing cadets maximum flexibility to follow their developing interests.

6. AFTERSCHOOL TIME OUT OF SCHOOL TIME (OST) OUT OF SCHOOL LEARNING (OSL)

These three terms are essentially interchangeable and refer to spaces and opportunities where youth-serving organizations facilitate youth learning as an afterschool program or community-based program. CAP uses the term out of school time or OST.

OST programs conceive of themselves as much more than babysitting; they are a venue for positive youth development. Membership organizations, clubs, youth movements, athletics, civic and service organizations, and the world-wide cadet movement are some examples of OST opportunities.

Accordingly the look-and-feel of OST programs tends to include *youth-adult partnerships (Y-AP)*, with adult volunteers serving in a mentoring role.

In the 21st century, OST leaders are attempting to professionalize youth-serving organizations through ongoing training for adult volunteers. There's increased accountability and an increased emphasis on safety practices. Accountability to donors and the public is also seen in the emphasis on program metrics and outcomes evaluations. Further, a complementary mindset is replacing a competitive mindset, with each youth space filling a niche such that individual participation in a particular program is less important than it is for a community to have a variety of opportunities.

CAP Context. CAP operates as a voluntary OST program, not as a mandated aspect of public schooling. Our niche is in our offering a youth-scaled, Air Force-style learning setting. The uniform, flying, and cadet cadre leadership environment are major attributes differentiating CAP from other worthy OST programs.

7. CONSTRUCTIVISM

Constructivism is the theory that knowledge, meaning, and understanding are actively “constructed” by learners. Learners do not merely receive and store new facts from an instructor but bring to the learning environment their previous knowledge and experience, which they build upon and interpret. The result is new ideas that are constructed in the learner’s mind, in their own personal, idiosyncratic thinking.

This self-built mindset naturally encourages learners to pose their own questions and explore their own interests. Constructivism typically values social interaction and dialogue. Put simply, constructivism means the learner plays an active role in constructing his or her own understanding of reality.

CAP Context. Constructivism is a useful theory for youth programs operating in the *out of school time* setting. In OST voluntary environments, youth programs must win participants’ attention and continued attendance. Learning delivered through a constructivist paradigm will allow for *free choice* exploration and individualized interpretation, which, in turn, makes learning more fun and appealing to self-motivated participants. Instructors, guest speakers, role models, etc., also benefit from the freedom to share their personal experiences and individual perspectives, versus having to hew closely to a rigid curriculum that one typically finds at the compulsory schoolhouse.

8. ADOLESCENCE

In the simplest sense, adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. Puberty is the classic beginning of adolescence, and “adulthood” has marked its end, to varying degrees of precision. In recent decades scholars have begun to understand a period of “early adulthood” as following adolescence, thereby discarding the older view of the age of majority or high school graduation as being adolescence’s end.

Researchers dig deep into adolescence, studying it from ever-narrowing perspectives: biology, psychology, cognitive and emotional development, psychosocial development, social pathways, evolutionary biology and risk taking, dating, and sex, rites of passage, and more.

Adolescence includes rapid changes in the brain and body, often at different rates, and is a time for healthy exploration of identity and learning independ-

ence. It can also be a stressful or challenging for teens because of these rapid changes.

CAP Context. CAP designed its Cadet Program for adolescents, opposed to children. Accordingly, CAP tightened some loopholes that previously admitted 10 and 11 year-olds, believing those pre-pubescent children are not developmentally prepared for cadet life. Indeed, CAP has added requirements for adult leaders to confer with parents of 12 year olds who apply for encampment. All of this is to say that the program is geared for young adults ready to explore their identity and learning independence.

9. FIVE C'S

Regardless of a youth programs theme — robotics, camping, aviation, etc. — a successful program will develop five attributes in the participating youth. The five C's are the outcomes we want to produce because they are linked to healthy and successful lives. And, if those five C's are developed, a sixth C will also develop synergistically.

The Five Cs

Competence: a positive view of your skills and abilities

Confidence: an internal sense of self-worth and belief in the future

Connection: positive bonds with peers and adults in your community

Character: commitment to a personal code of honor

Caring: sympathy and empathy for other living creatures

The Sixth C

Contribution: active participation in civic life

CAP Context. The C's are outcomes all well-designed, safe, and fun youth experiences should aim to produce, regardless of the program's look-and-feel. Youth-serving organizations having a common set of outcomes enables them to work together and share best practices. CAP can borrow from Scouting and 4-H, and benchmark against peer organizations. Common outcomes also provide a moral north star for all youth work. If the organization is not aiming at these outcomes, broadly speaking, then the organization is failing its youth.

10. THRIVING

A thriving teen is one who is growing and progressing through changes in every conceivable aspect of life: physical, psychological, social, spiritual, etc. More than an absence of illness or barriers that prevent growth, thriving is a positive momentum in all aspects of a person's growth. We want kids not just to stay out of trouble but to become their best selves to thrive. Therefore, thriving includes protective factors that can help them avoid harmful behaviors and withstand personal setbacks. The *five C's* are marks of thriving.

CAP Context. In a highly-regimented lifestyle activity like CAP, it's easy to focus on metrics that are important only within the organization itself: a cadet's progression up the ranks, their attendance record, their membership renewal rate, and other business-like indicators. *The concept of thriving should remind us that what really counts in young peoples' lives is how they are doing as persons.* CAP is a vehicle for thriving, but is not more important than family, school, health, or other aspects of life. For many cadets, CAP's special qualities provide them a forum for thriving, the place in their lives where they feel the most at home, supported, and successful.

11. YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS (Y-AP)

Youth-adult partnerships (Y-APs) are characterized by multiple adults and youth working together in a democratic and collective spirit, where all participants are valued members of a team, to learn, to strengthen clubs and programs, and/or to solve community problems. Through Y-APs, adults and youth are each acting as teachers, learners, and collaborators in a shared enterprise. Collective reflection and critical thinking in an intergenerational, team environment is an important practice for learning in a Y-AP environment.

Y-APs differ from other youth-adult relationships because the emphasis upon youth voice and authentic decision making overcomes the tendency of adults to dominate the relationship and take control over the club, activity, or service project. Y-AP also differs from coaching or formal teaching in that the adult's role is one of a partner and enabler and less as a fount of knowledge or as a boss in a rigid hierarchy.

Through Y-APs, all participants have a part to play given their individual know-how, skills, and enthusiasms, collaborating across generations to make a dif-

ference in today's world. These lines from John Legend and Common in the song "Glory," theme for the movie *Selma*, express a Y-AP spirit:

*Now we right the wrongs in history
No one can win the war individually
It takes the wisdom of the elders and young people's energy*

CAP Context. Unlike in a typical school setting that is closed to all adults except teachers, CAP draws from the human capital of the full community, creating the potential for vibrant Y-APs. Indeed, every squadron is a unique, intergenerational cornucopia of civic assets: The professional expertise of cadets' parents. The subject matter expertise of local pilots. Cadet alumni. Military retirees. Civic-minded educators willing to volunteer as AEOs. Adult hobbyists with technical know-how in radios, drones, wilderness skills — you name it. Adults from every walk of life serve with cadets, creating fun and meaningful activities with cadets in a spirit of teamwork.

12. SCAFFOLDING

In the simplest sense, scaffolding is any system that guides progression toward a young person's goals. Training wheels on a bicycle are a type of scaffolding that facilitate skill-building. At the right moment (via a process called *fading*), an adult removes the training wheels / scaffold, but maintains a hand on the bicycle for stability. Eventually even that adult's hand is lifted from the bicycle to facilitate the end goal of riding a two-wheeled bicycle independently. Another type of small-scale instructional scaffold is the "Tell, Show, Do, Review" cycle common to drill and ceremonies instruction. Scaffolds help learners go one step at a time toward an end goal of independent competence.

From a perspective of equity and inclusion, scaffolds should be available and tailored to each participant. The learning environment needs to work for all youth, not just the most advantaged who are learning under a skilled and highly-experienced instructor and/or having access to the best technology and equipment.

CAP Context. In the context of a youth development program, scaffolds are the various supports, services, curricula, and program rules that shape the youth space and guide young people's development. In achievement-based

programs such as CAP or Girl Scouts, the program rules governing progression up the ranks are a form of scaffolding. The progressive leadership and aerospace curriculum are scaffolds. Cadet cadre position descriptions and the “leadership expectations” promotion criteria are other examples.

13. REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Reflective practice is the act of thinking about one’s actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. When Socrates famously commanded, “Know thyself,” he was saying that reflective practice is an integral part of the “good life.”

Reflective practice is a path leading minds beyond superficial thinking. Through reflection, people can see what paradigms, assumptions, frameworks and patterns of thought and behavior shape our thinking and action. People who develop a habit of reflective practice are said to become more creative, empathetic, and insightful leaders.

Some questions people ask as part of their reflective practice might include: What did I just learn? In what ways was I surprised by this experience? How did what I experience today relate to something I already knew? Did what I learn today challenge my prior beliefs or values? How might I use today’s experience to help my community?

CAP Context. Surveys report that cadets love CAP because they are granted opportunities available almost nowhere else. “I flew a small aircraft over my house!” “I learned wilderness skills from Special Forces!” “We provided the color guard for the mayor’s inauguration!” What makes cool experiences not just fun but meaningful is reflective practice. In CAP, our job is to help cadets ask themselves, “So what?” As in, “I just did something cool, but so what? Why is it valuable? How can I learn from that experience?”

14. DOSAGE

Dosage is the quantity and frequency of interactions with a youth program and its learning content. Greater dosage is assumed to yield larger, longer-lasting, and more impactful learning outcomes. Youth programs attempt to determine the sweet spot of dosage. Approximately how many doses of the program experience are needed, on average, for youth to achieve the pro-

gram's short- and medium-term learning goals? How much dosage is needed to truly "stick" with a young person?

CAP Context. The CAP Cadet Program attempts to win dosage through weekly squadron meetings, monthly special events on "Saturday," and summer programming like encampments and NCSAs. Additionally, changes made to the promotion requirements that allowed online testing at home, on demand (since 2010) and completion of Cadet Interactive modules from home, on demand (since 2021), increase opportunities for dosage by allowing the cadet to self-select dosage moments, versus being limited to times when the squadron is meeting.

Perhaps the biggest impediments to dosage are beyond a given youth program's control, namely the perennial facets of teen life in America. Dosage in CAP must compete against family, school, sports, other club and extracurriculars, part-time jobs, dating, video games, and everything else available to young people.

The concept of dosage, together with its related concept of *intensity*, reveals annual membership retention to be a red herring, for retention is merely a measure of paying annual dues that has no definitive impact upon actual participation in the program.

15. INTENSITY

Like *dosage*, intensity is a measure of participation in a program, but intensity is a richer concept that reflects the participant's depth of involvement, the focused attention they bring to program events, their role within a club, sports team, or cadet squadron. For example, two individuals might have identical dosage in a youth program, as evidenced by attendance rosters, but one individual might be a casual participant while the other has competed for and won a leadership role and emotionally connected with the extracurricular such that that activity is a key motivator in his or her life. That second individual is experiencing a higher intensity. Youth programs attempt to determine, on average, the level of intensity that is most likely to lead to youth fulfilling the program's learning goals. If that measure becomes known, the youth program can then attempt to deliver that level of intensity to all participants.

CAP Context. A cadet who participates in nearly all squadron events, accepts leadership roles, and volunteers for color guard service and earns Honor Credit for all achievements is a high-intensity participant.

Dosage and intensity reveal membership retention to be a red herring because in CAP, retention is merely an input, a financial transaction. The more important measure is what cadets learn through CAP experiences, which are functions of dosage and intensity.

16. AUTHENTIC DECISION MAKING

In the context of PYD, authentic decision making refers to the principle of empowering youth to set the direction and make operational choices for the club or activity. Authentic decision making should be a privilege youth earn through experience, with greater opportunities following the youth's acceptance of responsibility for their choices as leaders. As with leadership in the adult world, authority to decide should be linked with responsibility for the decisions, and vice versa. Under *in loco parentis*, some decisions are never eligible for adults to delegate to youth, such as matters of safety, signing contracts, and chap-eroning activities.

CAP Context. Cadets' scope of authority and responsibility are reflected in the job descriptions of cadet cadre. By design, cadre job descriptions are progressive, expanding in scope, complexity, and challenge by rank. Job descriptions are calibrated to the cadets' study of *Learn to Lead*, by their CAP grade, and their age and longevity in CAP.

In CAP, authentic decision making means that cadets should have freedom to experiment and make mistakes in an environment where momentary setbacks are okay – CAP must be a safe place to fail. Decision-making within the scope of the cadet's job description is the default, but adult staff should ask questions to help cadets examine the issue from several angles. Further, beyond matters of *in loco parentis*, adult leaders have duty to intervene and veto cadets' decisions if they violate the Core Values or substantially degrade the quality of experience afforded to junior-ranking cadets.

17. HART'S LADDER

Hart's Ladder is a widely-applied model for classifying the degree to which youth are afforded hands-on leadership opportunities in a youth program. More than a merely descriptive tool, Hart's intention was for the ladder to cause adults to think about ways to share power with youth.

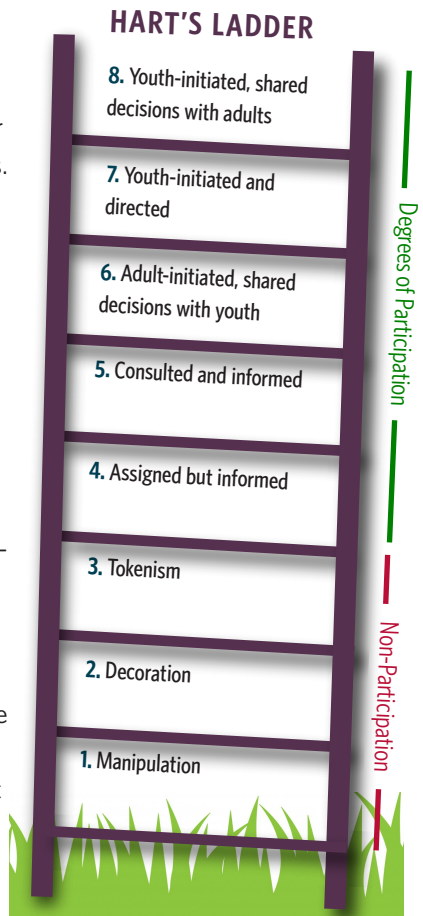
The ladder consists of eight developmental stages or rungs, each progressively more challenging. Rungs one through three are non-participatory. Rungs four through eight are authentically participatory. (See diagram.)

Behind the concept of Hart's ladder is a belief that young people already possess capabilities to lead and help change their community for the better. Indeed, to develop young people into full, active citizens, youth programs must be intentionally designed to promote youth voice, authentic decision making, and a sense of shared ownership. Hart's ladder is a key tool for youth-adult partnerships.

Hart wrote, "the highest possible degree of citizenship is when we, children or adults, not only feel that we can initiate some change ourselves but when we also recognize that it is sometimes appropriate to invite others to join us because of their own rights and because it affects them too, as fellow-citizens."

CAP Context. Cadets say they want activities to be cadet-led. What's that mean? Hart's ladder helps explain what they have in mind.

If you're a CP officer, the next time you're working with cadets, aim for joint decision-making to the maximum extent practical. Be especially receptive when cadet officers attempt to initiate deci-



sions on their own, with your cooperation. Think of Hart's ladder as you evaluate your own leadership practices and those of your colleagues.

But wait. Don't we have progressive expectations for cadets? Airmen mostly follow, represented by stages four or five, while field-grade cadet officers have earned the greatest degree of autonomy in cadet life.

If a C/SSgt comes to you saying, "I'm in charge of the flight for thirty minutes. I'd like to go outside now for fitness activities, while we've got the daylight..." That's an attempt at stage eight behavior that's still within the scope of a flight sergeant.

Or, suppose you're in the field for compass work. Cadets will break into groups of four. You ask, "How are we going to stay in touch while separated?" That stage six practice is superior to the purely directive stage four practice of "Cadets, when I blow this whistle, you will..."

Hart's ladder can help us empower cadets to the maximum extent practical. We should be aiming for youth-initiated decisions representative of Hart's stage 6, 7, and 8 practices.

18. INCLUSION

In the context of a youth program, inclusion is an ideal to be continuously pursued, where all youth eligible to participate are given maximum opportunity to do so. Inclusion means individual can contribute fully to the organization's mission while embracing its core values. Put simply, inclusion means everyone is invited to the party *and* invited to dance.

An inclusive environment is necessarily a safe and welcoming environment: safe from bullying, free from favoritism where the unpopular receive less attention and opportunity than they are due, and authentically welcome and invited to participate.

OST programs undoubtedly enrich young peoples' lives and prepare them for outstanding futures. Unfortunately, lots of kids lack *access*. Location, cost, adult support, transportation, disability, family support – there are innumerable factors limiting access.

The principle of full inclusion calls for youth-serving organizations to be fully welcoming of all young people who wish to participate. The virtue of inclusion

creates a duty for youth programs to continuously improve environment so that every attendee is a genuine member of the group.

CAP Context. CAP's nondiscrimination policy promises to create a welcoming environment for all eligible members regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, marital status, or veteran status. One way CAP honors those policy promises is by making "reasonable accommodations." The physical fitness category system is an example of inclusion through reasonable accommodation. Cadet Audio, a program that makes textbooks available as podcasts, is another example. Even better than a willingness to make accommodations is the practice of universal design, where the varied abilities and limitations of everyone in the audience is considered at the outset so that all might participate without needing an accommodation.

19. ACCESS

Related to inclusion, refers to meaningful, pragmatic opportunities to participate, without being limited by artificial barriers (cost, location, unnecessary prerequisites). If youth programming is high-quality and leads to *thriving*, then all youth should enjoy full access to the opportunities.

CAP Context. CAP attempts to increase access to cadet life through the CadetInvest financial assistance program. This includes the Cadet Packet Program, the Curry Uniform Voucher, Cadet Encampment Assistance Program, Cadet Lift, Cadets Take-Off Program, Cadet Wings, and college scholarship programs.

20. SAFETYISM

A culture or belief system in which protection from harm in all its forms has become a sacred value that is more important than learning, the healthy formation of independence, experimentation with new experiences and new people, and any activity with unpredictable variables and elements of risk. Under safetyism, "safety" trumps all other concerns, no matter how trivial.

CAP Context. Safetyism is a populist (non-technical) mindset that stands in contrast with safety as practiced by professional risk experts. In aviation

safety, for example, safety professionals openly acknowledge that risk controls require trade-offs, and that the best aviators are people who think seriously about the likelihood and severity of risk and the opportunities to mitigate those risks.

21. FIDELITY

In the context of a youth-serving organization, fidelity is the degree to which local practices align with the professed policies and practices set by program designers at the national office. Fidelity is “keeping faith” with how the national office has designed the program, its rules, procedures, and standards.

A local program whose activities substantially deviate from the national youth program’s playbook might nevertheless achieve positive outcomes for young people, but those outcomes cannot be attributed to the national program, due to the lack of fidelity. The misalignment can even damage the national brand, which will decrease its impact. McDonald’s is where you go for a Big Mac, not spaghetti, even if the franchise owner is a superb Italian chef.

In the youth space with its duty of *in loco parentis*, fidelity can be the difference between a safe, wholesome environment and one marked by frequent injuries in the field or even a hunting ground for pedophiles.

CAP Context. With a robust library of rules and regulations and a military-style compliance inspection program, CAP emphasizes fidelity more than most organizations. However, having explicit standards of practice is one thing, but seeing those standards upheld in the real world is another matter.

22. THEORY OF CHANGE

A comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen. It maps-out or fills-in what has been described as the “missing middle” between what a program or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved.

A theory of change is an exercise in reverse thinking. You begin with the end in mind, the long-term goal you want your program to achieve. Then you identify all the prequisites — all the “stuff” that has to happen for those long term goals to become a reality.

This happens, and then this happens, which triggers this to happen, and meanwhile that happens and that happens, and put it all together and we see how a collection of activities causes a major change to materialize.

Program designers and community leaders work together to create the theory of change. Each contributor brings their own expertise to the table, refining the theory of change until all stakeholders are convinced that the ToC's logical sequence truly will produce the intended change. Peer scrutiny or examination of the ToC by knowledgeable bystanders helps program designers build a program that is likely to succeed.

CAP Context. Cadets are more than young people, they are aviation enthusiasts who have voluntarily enrolled in an Air Force-affiliated OST experience. Our theory of change (regarding pilot careers) goes something like this:

- Begin with teens who are aviation enthusiasts
- Introduce them to principles of aviation science through our Aerospace Dimensions modules
- Add hands-on activities through AEX and STEM Kits to make the learning fun
- Add role models via CAP pilots around the squadron and USAF members at encampment
- Add orientation flights in CAP and/or military aircraft . . .
- And now you have meaningfully assisted the America in responding to the worldwide pilot shortage

23. IN LOCO PARENTIS

Latin for "in the place of the parent," *in loco parentis* is the voluntary delegation of parental authority to another adult, as with the case of adult chaperones in youth programs. By accepting a chaperone role, an adult also accepts a duty to protect the child's general safety, exercising care as a reasonable adult would for the benefit of their own child.

In loco parentis means chaperones cannot stand by indifferently when risks to bodily injury arise at a youth activity. It also means chaperones will organize the activity so that teenagers obey a basic code of conduct that keeps the activity age-appropriate and safeguards their moral development.

Accordingly, *in loco parentis* requires chaperones to take reasonable precautions mitigating the risk of illegal activity occurring at youth events (e.g., illegal

drug use, assault) and behaviors that impede a positive learning environment (e.g., sexual activity, profanity, bullying, etc.).

CAP Context. CAP's standards of practice for proximity of supervision, minimum supervisory ratios for adults to cadets (new guidance is forthcoming) are practical matters stemming from *in loco parentis*. Making lodging assignments by gender and segregating by age to the extent practical are other examples. Most of all, *in loco parentis* establishes the senior member's duty to act always as a trustworthy adult authority figure and never as a peer to cadets.

24. SERVICE LEARNING

Service-learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs.

Service-learning empowers students to be involved in their own learning, to share their voice, and to care about their community. It is a flexible approach, easily adapted to different age levels, community needs, and curricular goals. Service-learning supports hybrid models of learning including online learning. It helps bridge the gulf between online, in-school, and afterschool learning. Service-learning allows students to address real world issues, inspiring them to serve, learn, and change the world. Good service learning includes *youth voice*, *authentic decision making*, and *reflective practice*.

CAP Context. Cadets experience service learning in many forms. Community service projects like the Wreaths Across America program are available to nearly all cadets. Cadet NCOs and officers have opportunities to serve on cadre, where they apply the leadership curricula to real-world challenges facing cadet organizations. The Cadet Advisory Council is another opportunity to improve cadet life for their peers.

25. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. Components of SEL include self-awareness,

self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness skills. Research has found that developing SEL skills in youth requires adults who habitually model those skills.

CAP Context. Our leadership and character elements are SEL topics. CAP has been doing SEL for decades without labeling that work as such.

K-12 schools are realizing the importance of SEL for citizen and workforce development, so there's a movement to intentionally develop SEL in America's classrooms. Critics worry that a SEL focus will detract from schooling's primary goals in academics. In such an environment, *afterschool / OST* programs like CAP demonstrate their value.

26. SELF-EFFICACY

A belief that an individual can act and create the positive results they want. Self-efficacy is the power to be the author of one's own future. Experts say it takes on three forms.

(1) Personal efficacy is the ability to produce desired effects on their own.

(2) Proxy efficacy is using authority figures, friends and family, and other capable persons to assist you in producing those effects, or to perform the main actions needed to create the desired results.

(3) Collective efficacy is when individuals pool their resources and/or support one another in a shared goal.

Efficacy is the foundation of motivation and overall welfare because unless you believe you can marshal your talents and achieve something (either on your own or with help), you'll have little incentive to act and even less incentive to keep trying when life gets difficult.

CAP Context. Youth participate in CAP voluntarily, so from the very beginning of a cadet's experience, he or she is exercising freedom and making decisions about life. Cadets advance through the ranks at their own pace, so promotions are a mark of self-efficacy. Cadet life requires minimal parental involvement, so personal efficacy is being taught from the first moments in uniform. The *Lead 2 Change* tool provides cadets a resource for proposing a course of action, marshalling support, and implementing an innovative idea of their own.

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