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# Relationships and School Success: From a Social-Emotional Learning Perspective

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## Abstract

There is an increased body of research indicating the importance of social-emotional learning (SEL) in schools. SEL is the processes of acquiring the skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively. It is promoted through both direct instruction and the establishment of safe, caring, and supportive learning environments in which all students feel valued, respected, and connected. In support of such arguments are studies linking SEL to a number of positive students' outcomes, including better academic achievement, social behavior, and emotional well-being. This chapter addresses how SEL, especially *relationships* as a critical component of SEL, contributes to school success and mental health especially among youth, with research evidence. Further, on the basis that we often do not feel efficacious in fostering SEL due to inadequate training and information, this chapter provides evidence-based practices to support healthy relationships and learning environments.

**Keywords:** social-emotional learning, relationships, bullying, school climate, youth, academic achievement, mental health

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## 1. Introduction

Of all children and youth aged 5–18 in Canada and the U.S., 9 out of 10 attend school [1, 2]. Unfortunately, estimates suggest that students become increasingly disengaged as they progress through secondary school, with some studies estimating that 40–60% of youth show signs of disengagement [3], which often tend to be associated with other school maladjustment. Given that school adjustment problems foreshadow many types of dysfunction over the life

cycle [4, 5], it is important to understand the process through which students adapt to schools and identify different ways to support them.

Schools are challenging contexts for students, especially for youth, by nature and design. These challenges include the instructional features of classrooms and schools, such as didactic small- and large-group instruction, teacher-initiated/monitored learning activities, and programmatic curriculum sequences. At present, much is known about how students' cognitive and linguistic skills and their socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds function as precursors of their achievement and adjustment. Less well recognized are the many types of interpersonal challenges that youth confront in school. Beyond basic tasks such as relating with classmates and schoolmates and forming ties with teachers, youth find that they are under increasing pressure to compare and evaluate themselves, their abilities, and their achievements to those of peers. Many of these challenges are repeated as students progress through grades. In each new classroom, they must negotiate their needs in dyadic and group settings and reestablish relationships with classmates and teachers. Moreover, it is likely that these challenges are intensified when students change schools or cope with school transitions [6, 7].

In light of the above, an important task facing educational and developmental researchers is to investigate the roles of students' classroom/school interpersonal skills and relationships as precursors of school adaption and adjustment. Indeed, diverging from the traditional focus on the three Rs, including *reading*, *writing*, and *arithmetic* [8], an emerging line of research points to the importance of the fourth *R* of education, *relationships*. In corroboration, the school-climate [9] and social-emotional learning (SEL) [10] literature highlights the role of relationships in supporting school success and mental well-being.

The recognition of SEL has been gradually spread around the world in recent years [10]. SEL refers to the process through which children and adults develop a set of skills and competencies to recognize and manage emotions, develop care and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively; these skills are promoted through both direct instructions and the establishment of a safe, caring, and supportive learning environment in which all students feel valued, respected, and connected [11]. Its importance is evidenced through its relationships with various positive student outcomes [12].

To illustrate the importance to consider which aspects of students' school adjustment are affected by interpersonal factors, this chapter will first address how interpersonal relationships, including relationships with peers, teachers, and family, contribute to school success and mental health among youth. We will end the chapter with a discussion about how we can better support these relationships.

## 2. Relationships with peers

During early adolescence, peer groups become increasingly important as young people start to seek autonomy from their parents [13, 14]. In this section, we particularly address school bullying as a critical peer-group phenomenon that often threatens academic and psychological well-being.

Bullying is typically defined as an aggressive peer-to-peer behavior involving a power differentiation between the perpetrator and the victim; this behavior is also enacted repeatedly over time with the intention to do harm [15]. Researchers and educators have increasingly acknowledged that bullying continues to be a serious problem in schools around the world, with evidence that involvement in bullying (as a victim or a bully) affects children and adolescents' health. For example, more than 40% Canadian students in grades 6–10 reported being both bullied and bullying others and this high prevalence remains [16].

Bullying takes several forms, including physical assault, ethnic discrimination, rumor victimization, sexual harassment, and verbal assault. Being a victim is not without consequence - indeed, victimization by peers is associated with a broad range of difficulties, both immediate and long term, in the areas of mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being [17]. The detrimental effects of bullying do not end with the victims, however. A recent study of students in grades 8 to 10 has reported that nearly 90% of the students had witnessed either their friends or other students being bullied at least a few times during the school year and that witnessing bullying was associated with higher levels of depression [18].

### **2.1. Associations with academic achievement**

Academic achievements among youth are of great importance for prospective school and career choices. A growing body of research has demonstrated significant links between school bullying and academic achievement (e.g., see [19, 20]). Students who are bullied by peers are likely to demonstrate poor academic performance (e.g., see [19, 20]), as are children who bully others [21]. Together, this line of research is consistent with the arguments that children's social experiences at school affect their academic performance [11, 12]. A recent meta-analysis with 29,552 school students revealed significant negative correlation between peer victimization and academic achievement [22].

Few studies [20, 23] on bullying have investigated the influence of school-level factors on individual academic performance. Konishi et al. [20] conducted one of the few multilevel studies in this area and found that school-level bullying was associated with lower grades among 15-year-olds. This study has addressed the need to simultaneously investigate individual and contextual influences on students' academic achievement. There is also a link between bullying and high school dropout rates. Cornell and colleagues [24] have found that the prevalence of bullying as perceived by both ninth grade students and teachers was predictive of dropout rates for this cohort 4 years later.

### **2.2. Associations with mental health**

Researchers have long demonstrated that being involved as both a victim and bully seems to compound the impact of bullying, with bully-victims experiencing worse outcomes than either bullies or victims and being at greater risk for various types of mental health problems. These include anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, self-harm, suicidality, physical injury, substance abuse, and delinquency [25–27]. A recent trajectory study [28] has further demonstrated that, as compared to low-involvement students and after controlling for initial psychopathology, stable victims showed greater levels of anxiety, depression, and attention-deficit hyperactivity

disorder; similarly, stable bullies reported higher levels of anxiety, and those who shifted from victimization to bullying reported more anxiety, depression, and somatization. These findings underscore the importance of considering a child's history of involvement in bullying over time and view bullying as a dynamic experience, influenced by the social ecology.

Given the growing efforts to reduce bullying, we would speculate that the prevalence of school bullying might be declining. However, this may not be the case, particularly for sexual minority students. Students who are stigmatized or marginalized due to ethnicity, sexual orientation, and mental and physical illness are often victims of bullying, and much of this harassment takes place in schools. A recent trend study on harassment among adolescents has shown that sexual minority students continued to report higher rates of victimization than exclusively heterosexual peers over time [29]. Victimized sexual minority youth were at greatest risk not only for mental health concerns [30–32].

### **3. Relationships with teachers**

Educators and researchers have increasingly acknowledged the imperative for creating a positive school climate, both to promote social and emotional competencies and optimize students' learning; teachers hold the key to such a learning environment [12, 33, 34]. Strong and supportive relationships provided by teachers are fundamental to the healthy development of all students in schools [35, 36]. Positive student-teacher relationships serve as a resource for students at risk of school failure, whereas conflict or disconnection between students and adults may compound that risk [37]. Although the nature of these relationships changes as students mature, the need for connection between students and adults in the school setting remains strong from preschool to high school [38]. Even as schools place increasing attention on standardized testing and accountability, the social and emotional quality of student-teacher relationships contributes to both academic and social-emotional development [39]. As such, student-teacher relationships provide a unique entry point for educators and others working toward improving the SEL environments of schools and classrooms.

#### **3.1. Associations with academic achievement**

Although students have less time with teachers during high school, there is strong evidence that relationships with adults in these settings are among the most important predictors of school success [36]. The quality of relationships that students form with their teachers has been repeatedly associated with students' academic and social-emotional outcomes [40]. High-quality student-teacher relationships are most often characterized by high levels of warmth, sensitivity, and emotional connection, and low levels of dependency, negativity, and conflict, which are highlighted in both attachment and self-determination theories [41–43]. Although the need for emotional support is perhaps more self-evidently important in the lower grades, adolescents are highly sensitive to the emotional rapport they establish with adults in school settings, and experience of strong connections to adults has been consistently linked to long-term academic success [44]. By conducting a meta-analysis, Roorda and



colleagues [45] found significant associations between student-teacher relationships and students' academic engagement and achievement spanning from preschool through high school. Longitudinal research [40, 46] has also shown the positive associations between high-quality student-teacher relationships and academic adjustment. Although both family and teacher support are important in predicting students' achievement, research has indicated that student-teacher connection was the factor most closely associated with growth in academic achievement from eighth to twelfth grade [39].

### 3.2. Associations with mental health

Connectedness to school during adolescence has emerged as a key area for building protective factors for positive educational outcomes and lower rates of health-risk behaviors [47, 48]. Students who are not engaged with learning or who have poor relationships with teachers are more likely to use drugs and engage in socially disruptive and sexual risk behaviors, report anxiety/depressive symptoms, have poorer adult relationships, and fail to complete secondary school (e.g., see [49, 50]). Therefore, the potential consequences for the students to become disconnected from school are far reaching. Longitudinal research from the U. S. reveals that high school students reporting greater connectedness to teachers display lower rates of emotional distress, suicidal ideation, suicidal behavior, violence, substance abuse, and early sexual activity [51].

Teachers can also serve as a protective factor against negative developmental outcomes, especially for marginalized and minority youth (e.g., see [31, 52]). Indeed, since Werner and Smith's [53, 54] longitudinal study of over 30 years, the importance of having at least one significant adult as a means for fostering resiliency among children and youth identified as 'at risk' has become a well-documented phenomenon [55–57]. Previous research findings are in accordance with suggesting that this 'significant adult' needs not be a parent or relative. This may be especially true during adolescence when youth often seek nonparental mentors and role models. Many sexual minority youth fear or face rejection by their parents because of their sexual identity [58]. In support of this argument, a Canadian study, with population-based data from high schools, has shown that supportive relationships with teachers significantly contributed to reducing greater risk for social-emotional problems not only for sexual minority youth experiencing peer victimization, but also for heterosexual youth who had been victimized by peers [31]. The results support the resilience perspective that a significant adult is not necessarily a parent or relative but can be an outside adult, including a teacher.

## 4. Family involvement

Beyond peer and teacher relationships, the fourth R can also be manifested when the family proactively engages in practices and activities that serve to promote learning and development [59]. Given that these practices and activities can take place within the home, and in partnerships with the school and the community [60, 61], such involvement is in line with the ecological framework [62] that highlights the interplay between two important systems (i.e., the family and the school).

Family involvement is essential to academic and mental health outcomes for children [63] and youth alike [64–66]. Several frameworks are available in the conceptualization of family involvement. For instance, based on a sample of 24,599 eighth graders, Ho and Willms [67] established a four-factor model that includes home discussion (e.g., discussing school programs with the child), school communication (e.g., contacting school personnel), home supervision (e.g., limiting TV time), and school participation (e.g., attending parent-teacher meetings). More recently, Epstein and her colleagues [68] proposed a framework that details six common types of involvement in efforts to organize the disparate literature: (1) parenting: when schools and/or community provide help to the family in establishing a positive home environment that supports learning and development; (2) communicating: when the family and schools and/or community establish an effective channel to communicate about the child's progress; (3) volunteering: when the family supports school operations and functions in collaboration with the school itself and/or community; (4) learning at home: when the family supports the child's learning at home, such as by monitoring his/her homework or providing intellectual stimulations; (5) decision-making: when schools and/or community assist family members (e.g., parents) to become leaders and representatives in decision-making pertinent to school operations; and (6) collaborating with the community: when the family leverages school and community services and resources to better support the child's learning and development.

In light of these frameworks, family involvement encompasses not only home-based involvement but also a reciprocal relationship between the family and the school where they share responsibilities and goals to support learning and development [69].

#### **4.1. Associations with academic achievement**

There is little doubt that family involvement assumes a critical role in academic outcomes. Indeed, research has consistently indicated a significant association between family involvement, specifically that of parents, and academic achievement across students of different ages, cultural groups, and socioeconomic statuses [70, 71]. For example, a meta-analysis (50 studies) found that school-based involvement and academic socialization were positively and significantly associated with academic achievement among middle-school students [72]. Of note is that academic socialization, such as when parents communicate their expectations for education or discuss learning strategies with the adolescent, yielded the strongest effect size [72]. In corroboration, another meta-analysis (52 studies) involving a group of culturally diverse secondary school students revealed that parental academic expectations had the strongest significant relationship with overall academic achievement, followed by parenting style, homework assistance, and home-school communication [65]. Moreover, parental attendance and participation in school activities were strongly associated with specific grades [65]. In addition to achievement, youth of academically involved parents tend to use more self-regulated learning strategies, spend more time on schoolwork outside of class time, and show higher levels of academic engagement [73]. At the same time, they tend to exhibit stronger feelings of enjoyment, value, and interest toward learning [66, 74] and are more likely to pursue graduate studies [64].

In light of the multidimensional framework of family involvement, it is important to recognize that while certain aspects of family involvement may be positively associated with academic outcomes, other aspects may demonstrate a negative correlation. For example, in their meta-analysis, Hill and Tyson [72] found a negative correlation between homework assistance and academic achievement among middle school students. At first glance, these findings seem to be somewhat counter-intuitive because they imply that more parental involvement is linked with poorer academic achievement. Further considerations, however, suggest that these negative associations may reflect the tendency for parents to communicate more with schools or become more engaged with their child's homework when they realize the poor performance [63, 67, 72]. These associations may also illustrate age differences in terms of what constitute as effective forms of family involvement. For example, a reason why homework assistance is associated with poorer achievement among youth is that such aid may be viewed as threats to their sense of efficacy and autonomy [66, 75]. To elucidate these speculations, longitudinal studies are warranted.

#### **4.2. Associations with mental health**

To the extent that family involvement operates holistically as opposed to being geared toward academic achievement specifically, recent studies have associated such involvement with outcomes that extend beyond the academic domain. When families are involved in education, youth tend to have better relationships with their teachers [76], own a clearer sense of identity and future directions [77], and hold more positive perceptions of self-competence [73] and global self-worth [78]. In corroboration, a longitudinal study that followed a culturally diverse sample of students from grades 7 to 11 indicated that family-teacher communication and home-based involvement (e.g., scaffolding youth to take responsibility of learning) were associated with decreases in problematic behaviors and depressive symptoms over time [79]. Interestingly, the developmental benefits associated with home-based involvement were stronger for those experiencing more parental warmth. Of note is that although it remains unclear why family involvement promotes better mental health functioning, it is speculative that it does so by conveying a sense of caring and support that acts as a buffer toward maladaptive outcomes [66]. Another potential mechanism is that by engaging in frequent school-based involvement, families will have more opportunities to form positive relationships with teachers, which, as we will see below, also play an instrumental role in academic and mental health outcomes.

#### **4.3. Parent-teacher relationship**

Thus far, we have considered family involvement in broad terms that capture not only home-based but also the structural part of school-based involvement (e.g., parent-teacher discussions or meetings). We will now extend our focus to a more relational aspect of school-based involvement. Specifically, we will explore the parent-teacher relationship, which is perhaps the most salient fourth R within the dimension of home-school partnership. A positive parent-teacher relationship is one that is characterized by factors such as interpersonal trust, mutual respect and support, two-way communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration [80, 81].



At the same time, it is related to teachers' and parents' perceptions of one another's beliefs, attitudes, and values toward education and involvement [82–84]. To the extent that the parent-teacher relationship quality serves as a stronger predictor for achievement and social adjustment than the frequency of home-school contacts [80, 84], an emerging line of research is emphasizing the need to examine the quality of the parent-teacher or parent-school relationship in relation to developmental outcomes [83, 85, 86].

When the quality of the parent-teacher relationship is favorable, student outcomes tend to be more positive. In the academic domain, the high-quality parent-teacher relationship is associated with better test scores and competence in language and math [82, 84], as well as overall school performance [80, 87] among kindergartners and primary and secondary school students. Further, although research regarding the role of the parent-teacher relationship on youth's mental health functioning is limited as compared to those on children (e.g., [88, 89]), available evidence underscores its importance. Among a group of secondary school students in the U.S., Froiland and Davison [87] found a negative association between a satisfying and trusting parent-teacher relationship and problematic behaviors. Similarly, a study conducted across 10 provinces in China found that the parent-teacher relationship was linked with better social (e.g., relationships) and career (e.g., goal-settings) outcomes among high school students [90]. Therefore, there is a need for schools to devote efforts to increasing the number of family-school contacts *and* enhancing the quality of the parent-teacher relationship as they both contribute to academic and mental health outcomes.

## 5. Practices to foster positive relationships

As illustrated in previous sections, the fourth R is related to students' academic and mental health functioning in meaningful ways. Accordingly, we will now consider potential ways to support healthy peer and teacher relationships, and family involvement.

### 5.1. Social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions

SEL is an approach that aims to protect children and youth from maladaptive outcomes by supporting their mastery of a range of affective, behavioral, and cognitive competencies [12, 91]. Broadly speaking, these competencies fall under the groups of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making [92]. Within the school context, SEL programs are designed to complement the school curricula to foster the core competencies in two steps. The first step involves informing and modeling SEL skills to students, followed by opportunities for them to practice and apply these skills in developmentally, contextually, and culturally appropriate ways [12]. The second step involves creating a safe and caring environment through peer and family initiatives, improved classroom management, effective teaching approaches, and whole-school community building activities [12, 91].

School-based SEL interventions serve as a potential avenue to support peer-, teacher-, and school-family relationships for a variety of reasons. First, the core competency of relationship skills focuses on promoting students' efficacy in establishing and maintaining healthy

relationships through effective communication, social engagement, relationship-building, and teamwork [92]. Accordingly, students will be more adept at creating trusting relationships with their peers and teachers. Second, by emphasizing teaching approaches that support the clear communication of expectations, cooperative learning, and classroom order [92], teachers can create a safe environment for students to become academically engaged. Third, interventions that invite the collaboration of family may also indirectly encourage more frequent home-school partnerships and better relationships.

A number of programs have been developed in line with the SEL approach. An exemplar is RULER [93], which equips primary and secondary school students with the competence to recognize and label emotions in oneself and others, understand potential causes and consequences of emotions, as well as express and regulate emotions in socially adaptive ways. By becoming emotionally literate, students will be able to interact with others more effectively; moreover, they will be able to problem-solve difficult emotional situations and have better mental health functioning [93]. Further, because RULER is incorporated into the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, in which books are often used to exemplify emotions and relationships, RULER also predicts improved ELA achievement [93]. Other effective programs are KiVa [94] and Roots of Empathy [95]. For example, KiVa is an antibullying program that has been found to reduce negative perceptions of peers (e.g., peers are seen as reliable and supportive), anxiety, and depression among children and youth [94].

## **5.2. Service learning programs**

Similar to SEL interventions, research also suggests that service-learning programs can enhance a range of competencies pertinent to academic and mental health functioning. By providing meaningful services to the community in ways that connect with the school curriculum, students are empowered with social (e.g., cultural competence and empathy), personal (e.g., self-esteem), civic (e.g., community behaviors), and academic (e.g., learning engagement) competencies [96]. With its emphasis on contributing to the community, service-learning programs are particularly suitable for older adolescents. As an example, college students who participated in a 12-week service learning program (Campus Corps) in which they mentored at-risk adolescents demonstrated improved interpersonal and problem-solving skills, community service self-efficacy, self-esteem, civic action, and political awareness [97]. These mentors were also adept at sustaining positive relationships with their mentees and families [97]. In view of this line of evidence, service-learning programs may also be a promising approach to equipping students with social competence that can benefit their peer and teacher relationships.

## **5.3. Intervention programs and professional training for family and teachers**

To encourage family involvement, it is important to first consider the underlying factors that may motivate or hinder such involvement. At the family level, three major factors have been identified to drive involvement, including parents' motivational beliefs, perception of invitations, and perceived life contexts [85]. Specifically, family involvement is more likely to occur when parents hold a belief that they should be involved in education, feel efficacious

that their involvement would promote better outcomes, perceive that they are welcomed by the school, teachers, and the child, as well as have the necessary skills, knowledge, time, and energy to become involved [85]. In support of this, children whose parents endorse the belief that it is their role to be involved in education and feel efficacious in doing so have more adaptive functioning [86]. When families feel that they are welcomed and respected, they are able to form more trusting relationships with schools; this is also especially true in inclusive [98] and culturally diverse schools [99].

At the school level, teachers and school personnel may face multiple barriers in their efforts to secure a family-school partnership. One of these salient barriers is the cultural differences that exist between families and schools. For example, African American parents often feel less welcomed in schools and experience barriers in securing resources for their child, possibly due to past and current discrimination [79]. Due to cultural differences in the conceptualization of parental roles or frustration that resulted from previous collaborative attempts, Latino families in the U.S. context may feel uncomfortable to participate in school events [100]. When schools and teachers do not share a common culture with the students and their families, it is also more difficult to establish a collaborative relationship that aims to support learning [101, 102]. In some cases, this collaboration is hindered by language barriers.

In light of the above, it would be important for school practitioners to offer training programs to families so as to heighten their confidence in their abilities to support learning. Moreover, given that some families may be more resistant to forming a coalition with schools, it is imperative that school psychologists provide teachers with assistance and guidance to develop individualized approaches [100]. Furthermore, training workshops that are tailored toward instilling teachers with a comprehensive understanding on different cultures and traditions are needed. Schools should also be prepared to include bilingual school personnel into the picture, who can help as an interpreter, or in preparing for bilingual signage and materials [100].

A plausible way to enhance more positive peer relationships, student-teacher relationships, and home-school partnerships is to provide relevant training opportunities to teachers and school personnel. First, given that some teachers may hold unfavorable views toward families who rarely participate in school events or whose child demonstrates academic and behavioral problems, intervention efforts are needed to challenge these beliefs [89]. Second, professional training workshops should aim to enhance teachers' efficacy in facilitating positive peer relationships, student-teacher relationships, and home-school partnerships in a welcoming manner. Third, educators, researchers, or other relevant providers should consider implementing intervention programs that target teachers' own social-emotional competence. Indeed, when teachers are socially and emotionally competent themselves, they are more effective in fostering and maintaining healthy teacher-student relationship, managing a safe classroom, and implementing quality SEL interventions [103]. Moreover, when teachers are comfortable with implementing SEL programs (i.e., an implicit indicator of their own social-emotional competence), they experience greater sense of teaching efficacy and job satisfaction, both of which are functional to more positive teacher-student relationships [104].

## 6. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the fourth R as it pertains to youth's academic and mental health functioning. The first relationship that is tapped by this "R" is among those with peers. Indeed, given that peers take a particularly strong presence during adolescence, it is perhaps not surprising that peer relationships have implications on both academic and mental health outcomes. On the one hand, peer relationships that take the forms of bullying and victimization are associated with lower achievement and dysfunctional well-being [17], potentially because poor relationships interfere with youth's ability to focus on their academic endeavors by placing an emotional burden on them. On the other hand, healthier peer relationships may promote adaptive outcomes by providing youth with academic (e.g., homework assistance) and social-emotional resources (e.g., emotional support) [105]. Thus, efforts are needed to equip youth with the skills and competence to establish and sustain healthy peer relationships. The second relationship that pertains to the fourth R is manifested between students and teachers. In view of the established literature highlighting a link between different pedagogical approaches and academic achievement (e.g., [106]), the significance of the student-teacher relationship on academic achievement is particularly telling. This significance illustrates that it is not only important for teachers to adopt appropriate instructional approaches, but it is also critical to maintain a supportive relationship with their students. To the extent that teachers and school personnel often receive very little or no training in building successful alliances with families and supportive and warm relationships with students [102], these efforts are necessary. Accordingly, there is an urgent need for preservice teacher training programs to revamp their curriculum so as to better prepare teachers. Finally, the fourth R is reflected through family involvement, and in particular, home-school partnership and parent-teacher relationship quality. Of note is that although the benefits associated with positive parent-teacher relationships are unlikely to differ as a function of age, the significance of specific types of family involvement may change over time [88]. For example, parents may provide less homework assistance as the adolescent grows older. Nonetheless, the positive association between family involvement and achievement may become stronger over time because older students become more adept at communicating to their parents regarding their learning needs, which can then facilitate more appropriate forms of involvement [63]. Moreover, recent studies have illustrated mental health benefits that accompany family involvement among youth. Given that adolescence is often marked by academic, social, and psychological challenges [107], it is of importance that efforts are dedicated to supporting policies that mandate family involvement in secondary schools, and perhaps even college. Similarly, it is critical to raise family's awareness regarding their significance in youth's learning and well-being. Ultimately, the concerted efforts of students, families, and school practitioners are needed to create a school climate where each member feels respected and supported.

## Conflict of interest

We have no conflict of interest to declare.



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