1 in 6 school-aged youth: significant impairments in life functioning due to a mental illness (e.g., ADHD, behavioral problems, conduct problems, anxiety, and/or depression)
1 in 4 youth: growing up in poverty and may be exposed to violence, chronic insecurity, loss, hardship, and disruption of life
1 in 5 youth: high levels of traumatic adverse childhood experiences
1 in 4 students: bullied by peers
1 in 10 adolescents: victim of physical violence by a dating partner
Suicide is 2nd leading cause of death for youth (ages of 10-24)

Strength-based approaches emphasize individuals’ strengths, capabilities, and resources and allow individuals to see opportunities, hope, and solutions

Positive Youth Development: An intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

Strength-Based Approaches for Positive Youth Development lead to:

**INCREASED:**
- Strengths, Abilities & Potential
- Connection and Engagement
- Social, Emotional, Behavioral Skills
- Readiness for College/Career
- Academic Achievement
- Persistence
- Leadership Skills
- Life Skills
- Life Satisfaction
- School Success

**DECREASED:**
- Mental Health & Behavioral Health Problems
- Alcohol, Tobacco, & Illicit Drug Use
- Social Disengagement & Isolation
- Violent & Anti-Social Behaviors
- Truancy/Dropping out of School
- Credit Deficiencies
- Suspensions & Expulsions
Strength-Based Approaches

- **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**

- **Climate and Culture Frameworks**
  - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) [https://www.pbis.org/](https://www.pbis.org/)

- **Evidence-Based Programs**
  - Caring School Community [https://www.collaborativeclassroom.org/programs/caring-school-community/](https://www.collaborativeclassroom.org/programs/caring-school-community/)
  - Strategies and Tools to Embrace Prevention with Upstream Programs (STEP UP) [https://selforprevention.com/sel-prevention-programs/](https://selforprevention.com/sel-prevention-programs/)

- **Character Education**
  - The I CAN Program [https://yesican.net/i-can/](https://yesican.net/i-can/)

- **Challenge Programs**
  - Rachel’s Challenge [https://rachelschallenge.org/](https://rachelschallenge.org/)
  - Mix It Up at Lunch Day [https://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up](https://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up)
  - The Great Kindness Challenge [https://thegreatkindnesschallenge.com/](https://thegreatkindnesschallenge.com/)

- **Social Media Campaigns**
  - The It Gets Better Project [https://itgetsbetter.org/](https://itgetsbetter.org/)
  - Making Caring Common’s Caring Schools #CommonGood Campaign [https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/high-school-campaign](https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/high-school-campaign)

- **Youth Leadership Programming**
  - Sandy Hook Promise’s Start With Hello Program [https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/prevention_programs](https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/prevention_programs)
  - Straight Talking Peer Education [https://www.straighttalking.org/](https://www.straighttalking.org/)

- **Relationship Building Strategies**