

# 15 Thriving Indicators



## Theoretical Measurement Markers of Thriving in Adolescence

Search Institute has developed a list of 15 "thriving indicators," or constructive behaviors, postures, and commitments that societies value and need in youth. These indicators serve as a way of evaluating and analyzing program success based on positive outcomes, instead of negative ones; in other words, they allow us to talk about what's *right* with kids, instead of what's "wrong" with them.

Elements of Thriving	Measurement Markers of Thriving
1. YOUNG PERSON	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Spark identification and motivation.</b> Young person can name, describe interests and sparks that give them energy and purpose, and is motivated to develop their sparks.</li><li><b>2. Positive emotionality.</b> Young person is positive and optimistic.</li><li><b>3. Openness to challenge and discovery.</b> Young person has intrinsic desire to explore new things, and enjoys challenges.</li><li><b>4. Hopeful purpose.</b> Young person has a sense of purpose and sees self as on the way to a happy and successful future.</li><li><b>5. Moral and prosocial orientation.</b> Young person sees helping others as a personal responsibility, and lives up to values of respect, responsibility, honesty, and caring.</li><li><b>6. Spiritual development.</b> Young person affirms importance of a sacred or transcendent force and the role of their faith or spirituality in shaping everyday thoughts and actions.</li></ol>
2. YOUNG PERSON'S DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXTS	<p><b>Opportunities &amp; Supports.</b> Young person experiences chances to grow and develop their sparks, as well as encouragement and support in pursuing their sparks, from multiple life contexts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>7. Family Opportunities &amp; Supports</b></li><li><b>8. Friends Opportunities &amp; Supports</b></li><li><b>9. School Opportunities</b></li><li><b>10. School Supports</b></li><li><b>11. Neighborhood Opportunities &amp; Supports</b></li><li><b>12. Youth Organizations Opportunities &amp; Supports</b></li><li><b>13. Religious Congregations Opportunities &amp; Supports</b></li></ol>
3. YOUNG PERSON'S ACTIVE ROLE IN SHAPING CONTEXTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>14. Youth Action to develop and pursue sparks.</b> Young person seeks and acts on adult guidance, studies or practices, and takes other actions to develop their sparks and fulfill their potential.</li></ol>
4. DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXTS ACT ON THE YOUNG PERSON	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>15. Frequency of Specific Adult Actions.</b> How often adults do concrete things to motivate, enable, and push young people to develop their sparks and connect them to others who can help.</li></ol>

## Additional Constructs Measured in Thriving Orientation Survey

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES	<p>Life satisfaction. Young person feels good about their life.</p> <p>Positive health perceptions. Young person feels strong and healthy.</p> <p>Contribution to social good. Young person volunteers or does things to make their world a better place.</p> <p>School success. Young person earns a B or higher average in school.</p> <p>Values diversity. Young person considers it important to know people of different races.</p> <p>Leadership. Young person has been a leader in a group or organization in the last 12 months.</p>
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Table developed from factor analysis reported in Benson, P.L., & Scales, P.C. (2009). The definition and preliminary measurement of thriving in adolescence. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4, 85-104.