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# POSITIVE IDENTITY

## What does Youth Development look like?

Young people demonstrate a <u>positive identity</u> when they have a sense of personal well-being and a sense of connection and commitment to others. Youth needs are either met in positive ways, negative ways or simply not met. The following are characteristics manifested by youth in each circumstance.

| Basic Need | Met in positive ways | Met in negative ways |
|---|---|---|
| **Safety and Structure**<br><br>A perception that one is safe in the world and that daily events are somewhat predictable | Self-assured, genuine, confident, problem-solver, engaged, secure | Unwilling to take on new challenges, distorted sense of boundaries |
| **Belonging and Membership**<br><br>A perception that one values, and is valued by others in the family and in the community | Attached, loving, friendly, social, cooperative, trusting | Gang loyalty, craves affection and attention, promiscuous, clinging, overly-dependent |
| **Self-Worth and Ability to Contribute**<br><br>A perception that one is a "good person" who contributes to self and others | Caring, exercises initiative, pro-social, supportive, empathic, optimism about the future | Competitive, selfish, over-involved, plays martyr, co-dependent |
| **Self -Awareness and Spirituality**<br><br>A perception that one is unique and is intimately attached to extended families, cultural groups, communities, higher deities, and/or principles | Personal integrity, grounded, sense of being unique, moral reasoning, respect for diversity | Unethical behavior, distorted sense of right and wrong, create sense of uniqueness by breaking rules and becoming known for infamous behavior |
| **Independence and Control Over One's Life**<br><br>A perception that one has control over daily events and is accountable for one's own actions and for the consequences one's actions has on others | Autonomous, confident, assertive, responsible, inner control, leadership, self-disciplined | Manipulative, reckless, bully, sexual prowess, rebellious, defies authority, immaturity |
| **A Close Lasting Relationship with at least One Adult**<br><br>A perception that one has a strong and stable relationship with an adult | Loyal, trusting, motivated, ability to ask for support, positive approval seeking | Negative approval-seeking, unhealthy dependence on an adult, sacrificing personal safety and/or dignity for affirmation from an adult |
| **Competence and Mastery**<br><br>A perception that one is building skills and that one is "making it" and will succeed in the future | Achieving, successful, creative, problem-solver, competent | Overachiever, arrogant, risk-seeker, cheater, workaholic, delinquent skills |