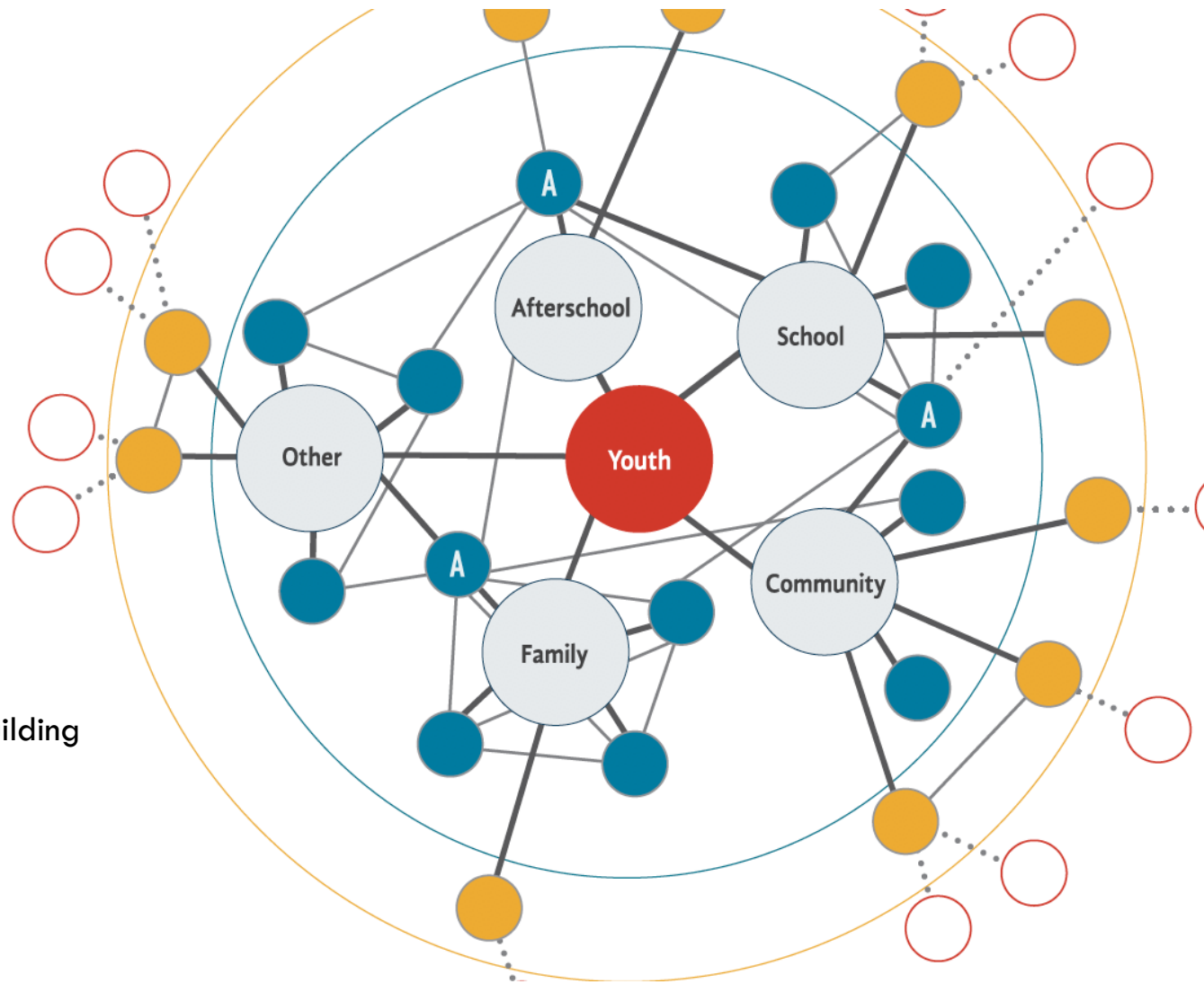


**CONNECTED SCHOLARS:
TEACHING STUDENTS TO RECRUIT
MENTORS AND BUILD NETWORKS OF
SUPPORT**

Sarah Schwartz, PhD, MEd

Webs of support

Moving beyond the dyad to building circles of support

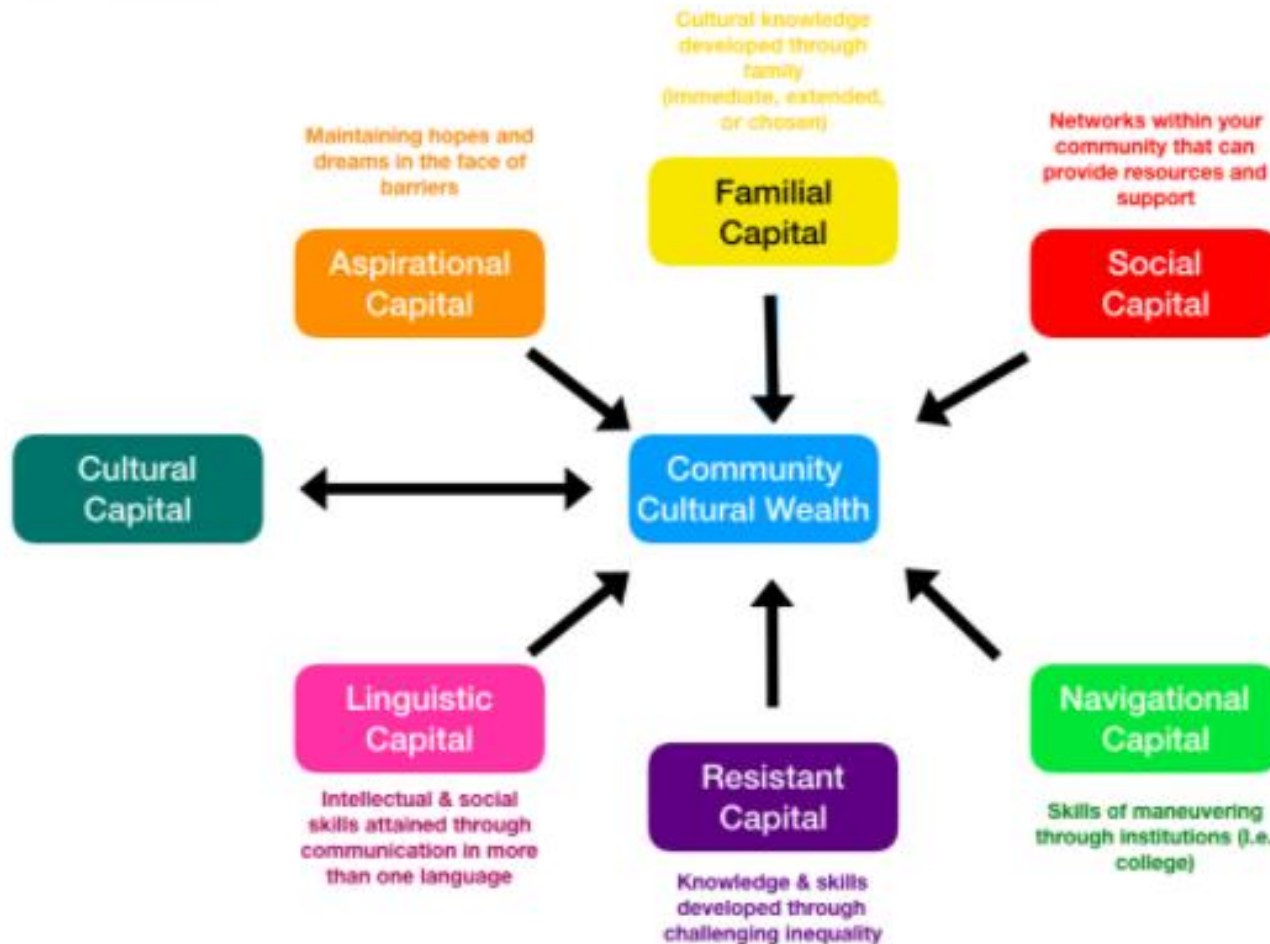


Social Capital

The resources, information, and support that an individual has access to through their social interactions and networks of relationships (Bourdieu, 1986)



Community Cultural Wealth



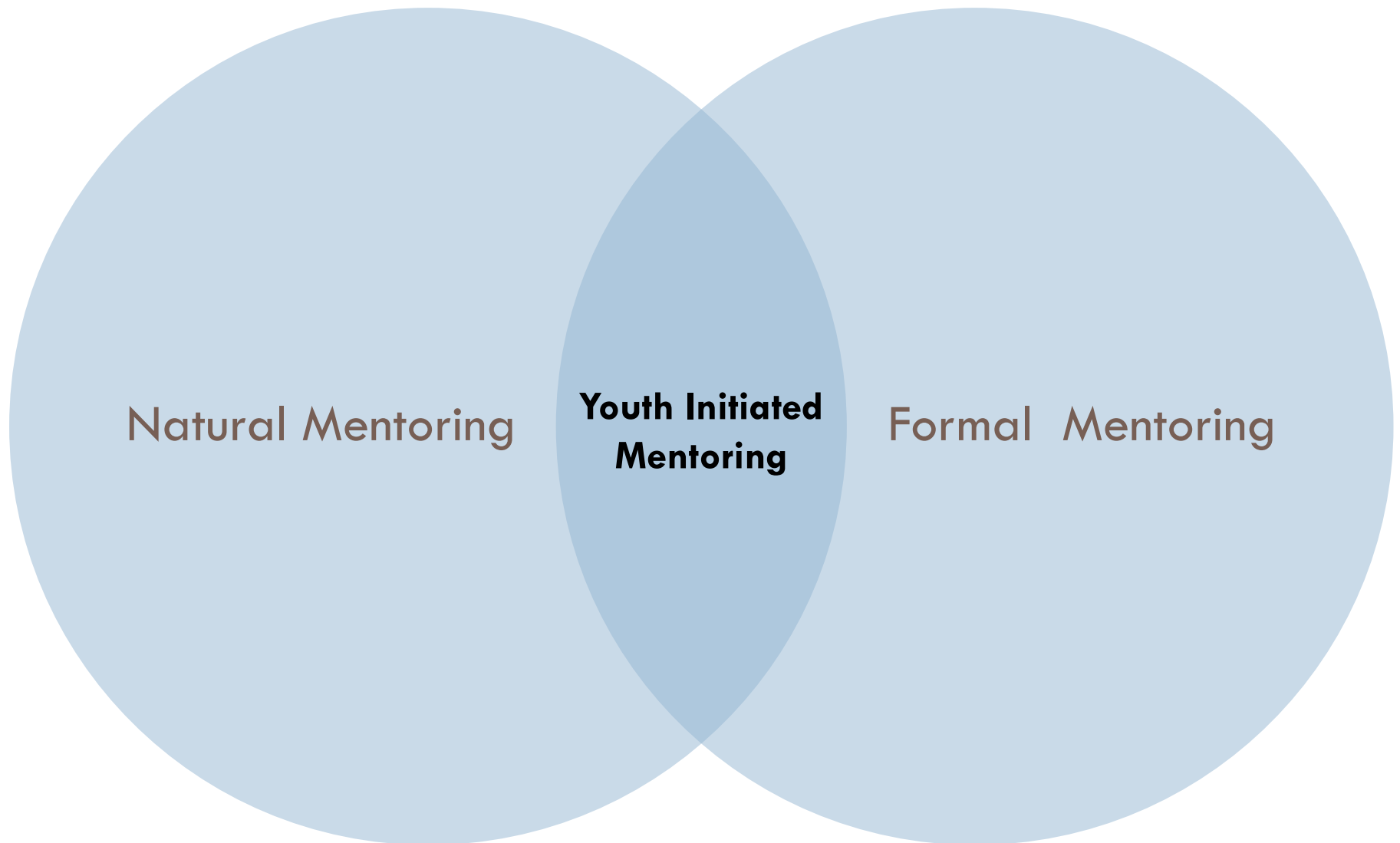
Yosso, 2005, model adapted from Oliver & Shapiro, 1995

Developmental Systems Approach

- Promote connectedness by strengthening both **individual** and **environmental** assets, and the **fit** between them
 - ▣ Individual assets: Help-seeking skills, network orientation
 - ▣ Environmental assets: Availability of supportive adults



Expanding our Approach to Mentoring



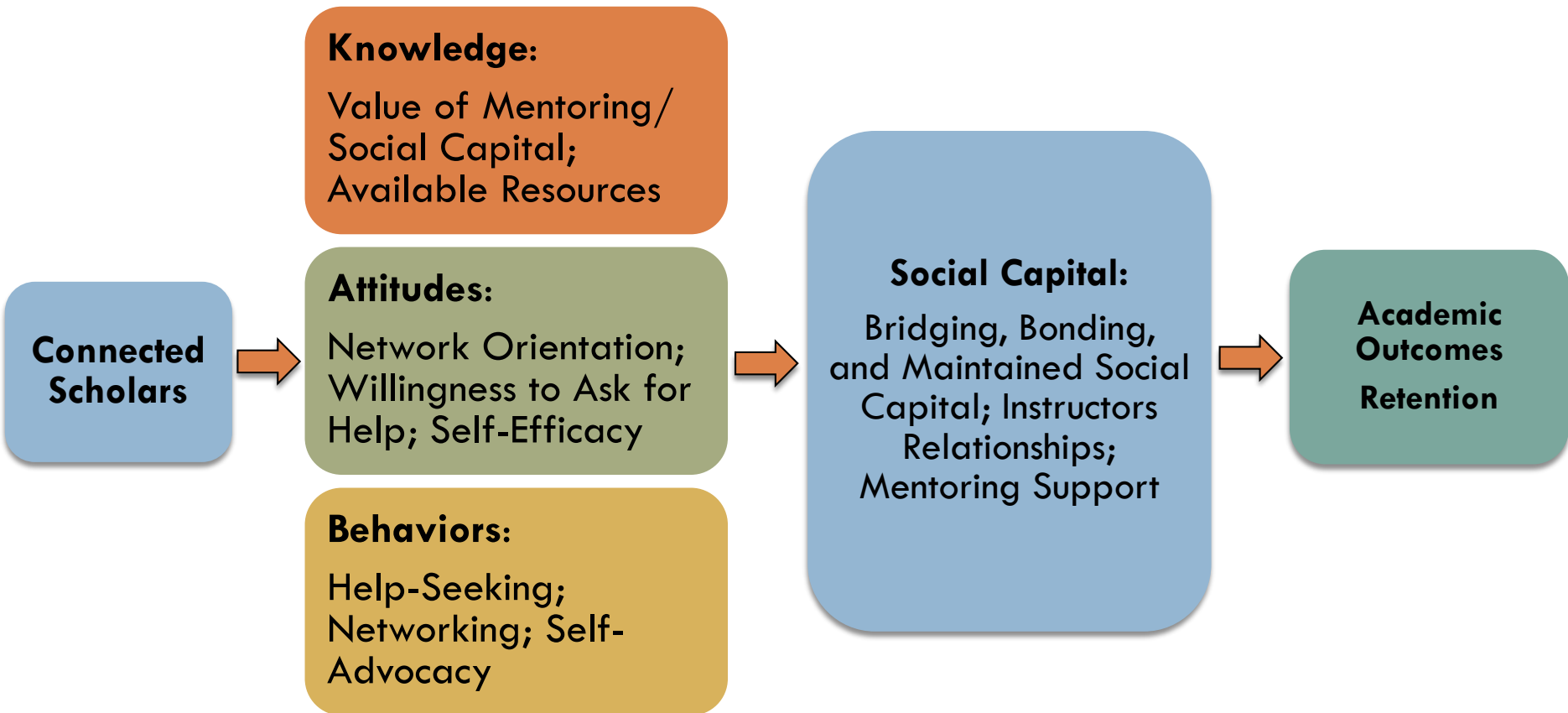
Creating Mentor Magnets



Connected Scholars: A Social Capital Intervention



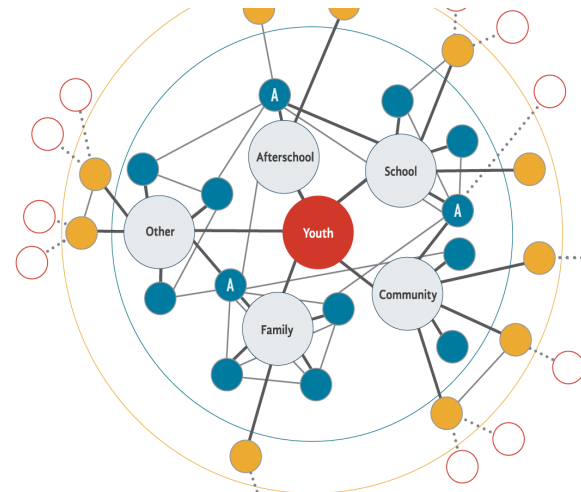
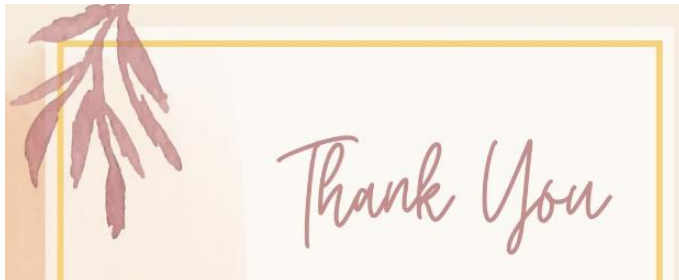
Model of Change



Connected Scholars Workshops

1.	What is a mentor and how can mentors help me?
2.	Who are the people in my life and what kinds of support can they provide?
3.	How do I identify and recruit mentors?
4.	How do I cultivate and maintain mentoring relationships?
5.	How do I overcome challenges related to networking and mentoring?
6.	How do I build mentoring relationships in college?
7.	How do I build my social network and become a mentor magnet?
8.	Networking Event & Graduation

Content/Activities





Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Children and Youth Services Review

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“I didn't know you could just ask:” Empowering underrepresented college-bound students to recruit academic and career mentors☆☆☆



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ABSTRACT

This study investigates a new approach to cultivating mentoring relationships in which adolescents participate in workshops to develop their capacity to recruit mentors and other supportive adults who can help advance their academic and career goals. Drawing on in-depth pre- and post- interviews, research observations, and participant feedback and workshop materials from a pilot intervention conducted with 12 ethnic minority students in their senior year of high school, this study explores whether and how the intervention influenced participants, as well as mechanisms of change. Results suggested that the intervention increased the value students placed on social capital and mentoring relationships, developed their knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy in how to develop such connections, and influenced their interactions with potential academic and career mentors. Although additional research is needed, this study highlights the potential of a relatively low-cost intervention to support underrepresented college-bound students in developing relationships that are crucial to college and career success.

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“I always used to be the guy who just sits around, ‘cause I didn’t like approaching people...So now I’m like, ‘I should go for it’...cause...you’re always gonna need somebody there to help you, somebody by your side, somebody who always has your back.”

Condensed 4-Session Version

1.	What is a mentor and how can mentors help me?
2.	Who are the people in my life and what kinds of support can they provide?
3.	How do I identify and recruit mentors?
4.	How do I cultivate and maintain mentoring relationships?
5.	How do I overcome challenges related to networking and mentoring?
6.	How do I build mentoring relationships in college?
7.	How do I build my social network and become a mentor magnet?
8.	Networking Event & Graduation

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

“I’m Having a Little Struggle With This, Can You Help Me Out?”: Examining Impacts and Processes of a Social Capital Intervention for First-Generation College Students

Sarah E. O. Schwartz,¹ Stella S. Kanchewa,² Jean E. Rhodes,² Grace Gowdy,³ Abigail M. Stark,¹ John Paul Horn,³ McKenna Parnes,¹ and Renée Spencer³

Highlights

- Social capital plays a key role in college and career success.
- Social capital is unequally distributed during the transition to college.
- Workshops can change students’ attitudes and behaviors related to the acquisition of social capital.
- A social capital workshop can improve first-generation college students’ academic outcomes.

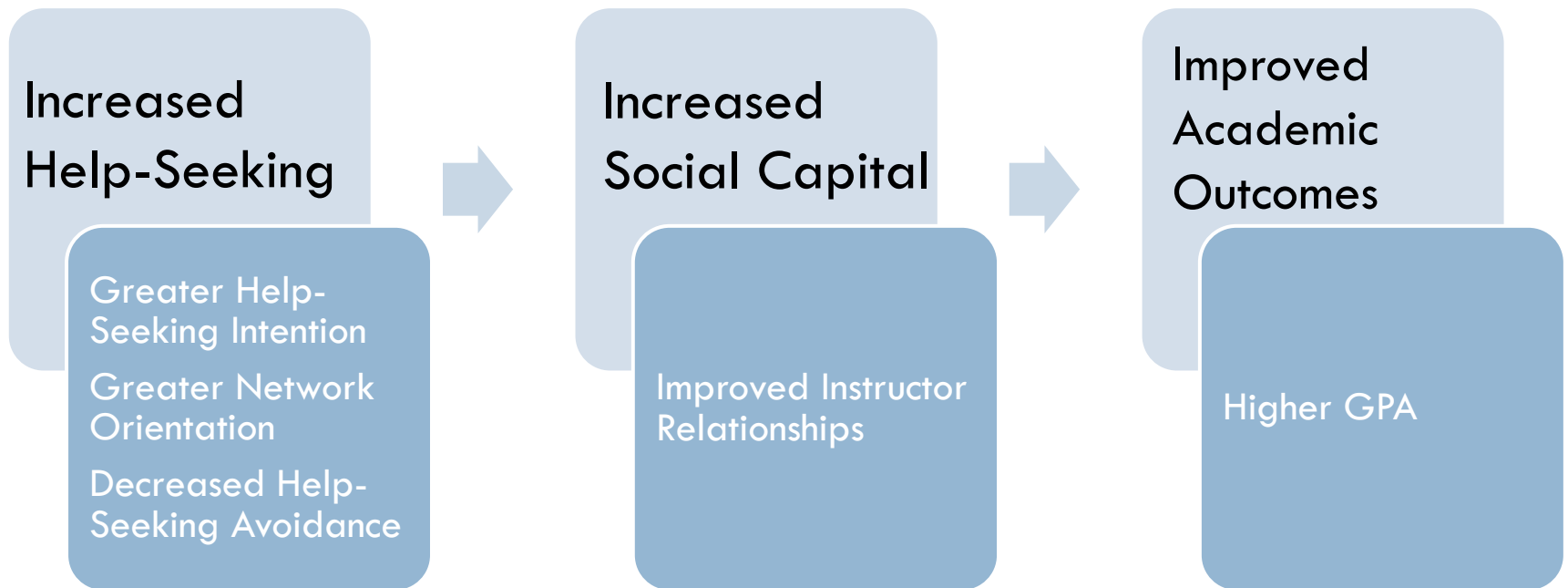
© Society for Community Research and Action 2017

Abstract Social capital plays a key role in college and career success, and research indicates that a dearth of on-campus connections contributes to challenges first-generation college students face in effectively navigating the college environment. This study investigates a novel intervention that focuses on the development of skills and attitudes to empower first-generation college students to

Keywords First-generation college students · Transition to college · Social capital · Intervention

Introduction

Impacts



Creating Connected Students:

Qualitative Results

Theme	Example
Improved Relationships with Instructors	“Those two professors that I met through [the program], I've been going to their office a lot...Sometimes I would just go once a week, and I wouldn't ever think much of going to a professor's office like that.”
Decreased Help-Seeking Avoidance	“If I stay after the class and I talk to the teacher about it, then I clear it up, ‘You're a teacher. I'm having a little struggle with this, can you help me out?’”
Increased Network Orientation	“Having a good relationship with your mentor can like give you a lot of connections... getting an internship or a job is all about like networking, that person knows someone, someone knows the other person, you know? That mentor helps you build that connection and he also prepares you on what to expect, because they already know the process, so they'll just tell you the direction to go.”
Increased Intention to Recruit Support	“I went and talked to [my professor], asked if she wanted to be my mentor, and she said ‘that's fine.’ She's now talking to me.”

Connected Scholars 1-Credit Course

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OVERVIEW

WHO WROTE IT?

TRAINING

PRICE

THE PROBLEM

HOW IT WORKS

LOG IN

BUY NOW



**YOUR CONNECTIONS TO ALL THE
THINGS AROUND YOU LITERALLY
DEFINE WHO YOU ARE.**

– Aaron D. O'Connell

Teaching to Fish: Impacts of a Social Capital Intervention for College Students

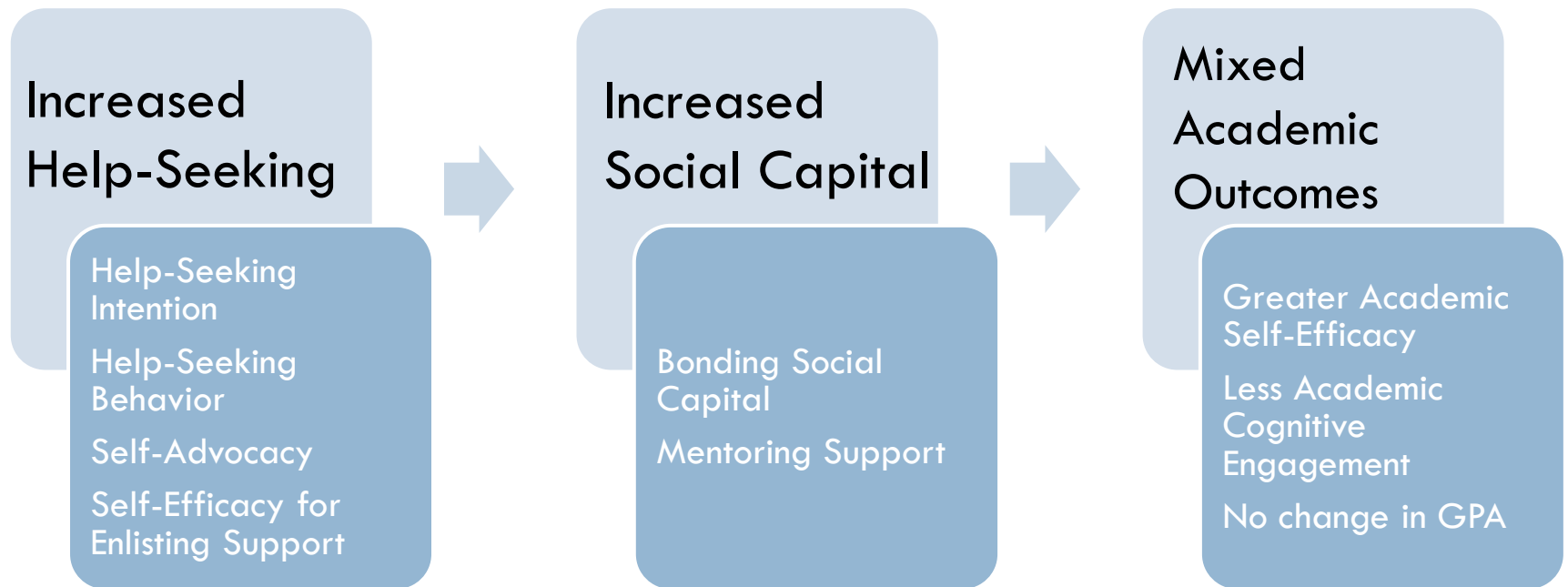
Sarah Schwartz , McKenna Parnes, Rebecca Browne, Laura Austin, Megan Carreiro¹, Jean Rhodes², Janis Kupersmidt³, and Stella Kanchewa⁴

Abstract

Social capital plays a key role in college students' academic and career success. Using a random assignment design, the current study evaluated the impacts of a one-credit college course designed to increase student help-seeking and social capital within a racially diverse sample of college students. Compared to the control group, students in the treatment group reported improved attitudes towards help-seeking, increased help-seeking behavior, and higher levels of social capital and mentoring support. Academic benefits were mixed, however, with an increase in academic self-efficacy, no impact on college GPA, and a decrease in academic cognitive engagement. Additionally, differential impacts based on year in college, race, and first-generation college student status were observed. Implications for research and practice are discussed.

Keywords

Impacts



Increased Help-Seeking

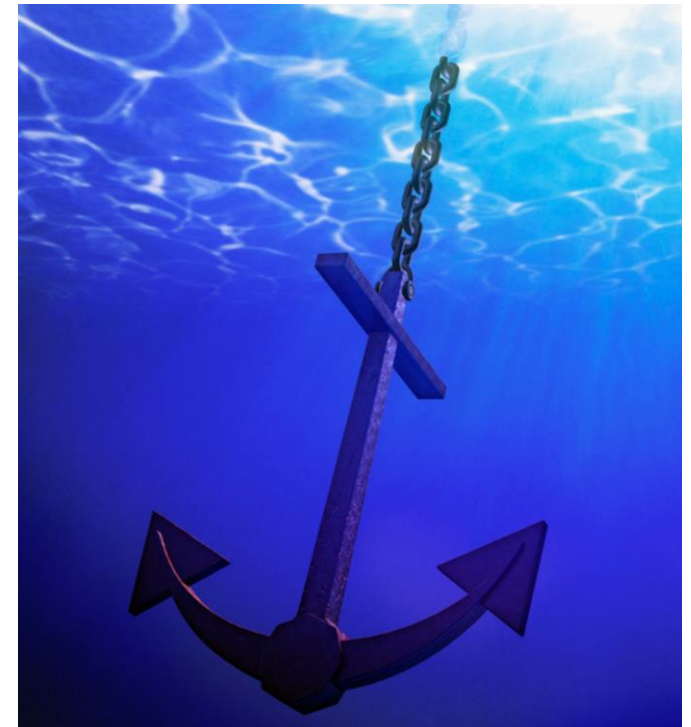
- “Before the class, I would just, you know, stick to myself and just not ask for help. But now I'm more open to that.”
- “When I wanted to, um, ask someone to shadow...from the class you learn the elevator pitch, literally I saw her by the elevators, and I just went in for it. So, like, I just knew, like, I was, like, "all right I got this", I did this in class...We did an informational interview once, which I also learned that from the class...and when I need, like advice for, like, a personal statement, I, like, I'll send it to her, and she'll look at it.”

Increased Social Capital & Mentoring

- “Yeah, after that class I, when I met new professors I was able to like keep a deeper relationship with them than the professors that I met before Connected Scholar.”
- “Because when I first reached out to [my advisor] it was just more so seeking help about what to do in college. But what I learned in the course about mentoring, I used it on my advisor and I don't really see her so much as an advisor only, but also as a mentor. Someone who's there for me and someone who's there to uplift me and encourage me and push me to do bigger and better things.”

Anchors and Webs

- Mentors can serve as **anchors**, connecting youth to **webs of support** (Varga & Zaff, 2018)
- Students “*could be standing in a room full of support, but they need someone to turn on the lights so they can see what’s there and reach for it*” (Center for Promise, 2015)



Becoming a Better Mentor: Strategies to Be There for Young People



MENTOR

CHAPTER
12



EXPANDING NETWORKS OF SUPPORT

Author: Sarah Schwartz, Suffolk University

By helping their mentees strengthen existing relationships and form new connections, mentors can encourage the exploration of diverse pathways and improve their mentee's access to new opportunities.



Read



Watch



Listen

<https://www.mentoring.org/resource/becoming-a-better-mentor/>

Acknowledgments

Questions: Email seoschwartz@suffolk.edu



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**Adolescent Connectedness and
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