

Positive Youth Development and the 4-H Thrive Initiative: Are 4-H Youth Thriving?

Kali Trzesniewski, Ph.D.

Shannon Dogan, Ph.D.

Gemma Miner, M.S.

Scott Mautte, B.S.

Kendra Lewis, Ph.D.



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Overview

- Research Underlying the Step-It-Up-2-Thrive Theory of Change
- California 4-H Thrive Initiative and County-Based Efforts
- Summary of the Research Findings



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Healthy Families and Communities Strategic Initiative

Three major areas of inquiry were identified:

- Issue 1: Promoting Healthy Behaviors for Childhood Obesity Prevention
- Issue 2: Youth Science Literacy
- **Issue 3: Promoting Positive Youth Development**



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Research Question

How can the 4-H YDP and other youth development programs best promote positive youth development with demonstrated impacts on individuals, families and communities?



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What is Positive Youth Development?

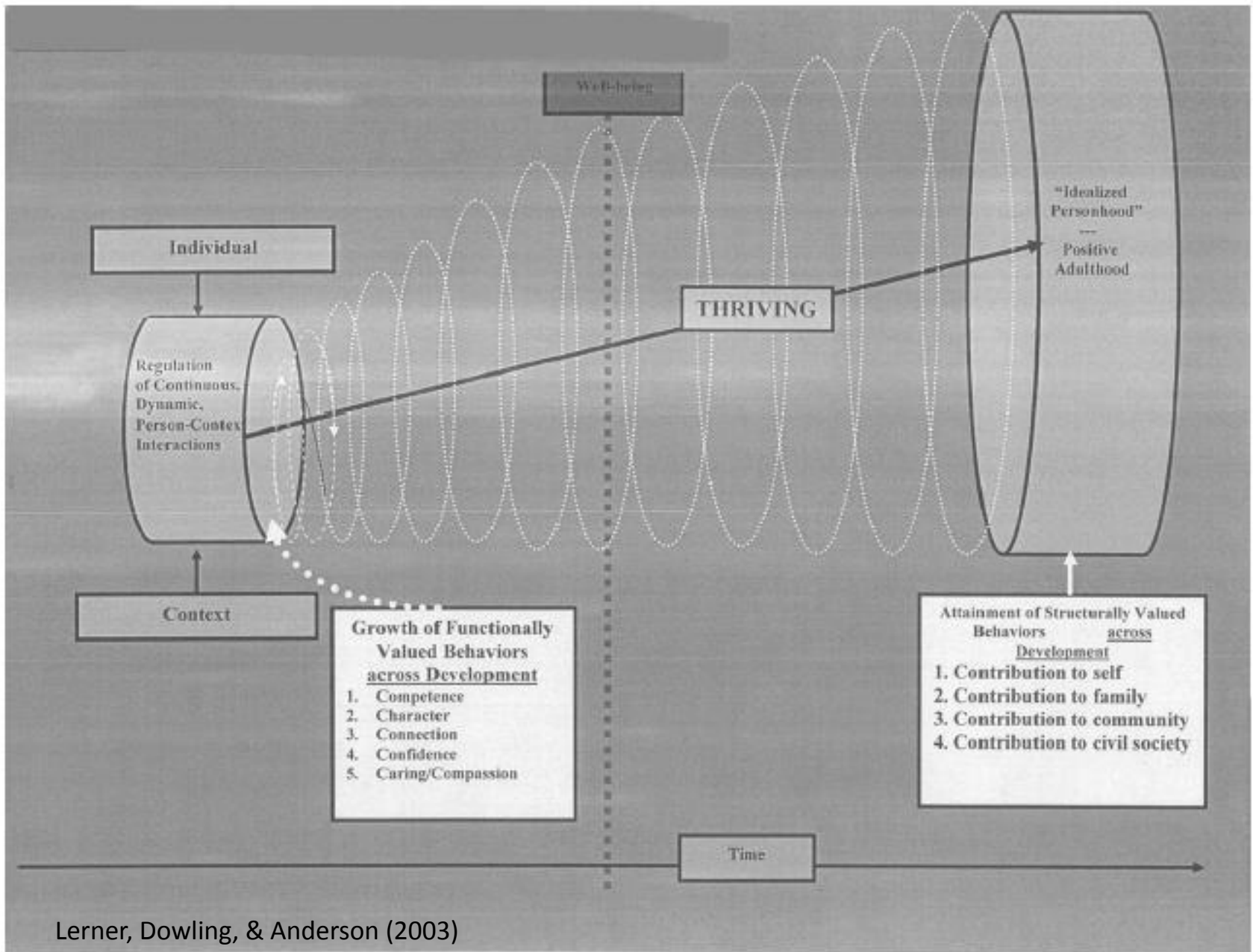
- Every young person has the potential for successful, healthy development and capacity for positive development
- Youth have strengths that exist within the developmental system
- *Relations* between individuals and contexts provide the bases of human behavior and developmental change
- Thriving is the growth of attributes that mark a flourishing, healthy young person

Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson (2003); Lerner, Lerner, De Stefanis, & Apfel (2001)



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How can the 4-H YDP and other youth development programs best promote positive youth development with demonstrated impacts on individuals, families and communities?



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STEPITUP2THRIVE

THEORY OF CHANGE

def.

Thriving [θraɪv] –verb

[1] A forward, purposeful motion towards achieving one's full potential.
[2] An orientation toward life marked by balance, meaning, and learning from experience, in which one knows and finds resources that foster one's talents, interests, and aspirations and through which one contributes to the common good.



Identify Sparks

Identify and grow Sparks and Spark Champions.

*Dr. Peter Benson
Search Institute*



Adopt a Growth Mindset

Understand brain development and move to a growth mindset.

*Dr. Carol Dweck
Stanford University*



Reflect on the Indicators of Thriving

Explore wheels of thriving indicators and risk factors. Youth and Guide use conversation questions to reflect on youth strengths and challenges.

*Thrive Foundation for Youth, Friends of the Children, and Dr. Linda Wagener,
Fuller Theological Seminary*



Build Goal Management Skills (GPS)

Grow indicators of thriving through learning and executing GPS skills: Goal Selection, Pursuit of strategies, and Shifting gears in face of challenges.

*Dr. Richard Lerner,
Tufts Institute for Applied Research*

CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOP AND INTEGRATE NEW SKILLS
FULFILLED POTENTIAL

IF

Adult Guides support youth to:

- Identify and grow their inner passions or Sparks;
- Understand and apply a Growth Mindset;
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THEN

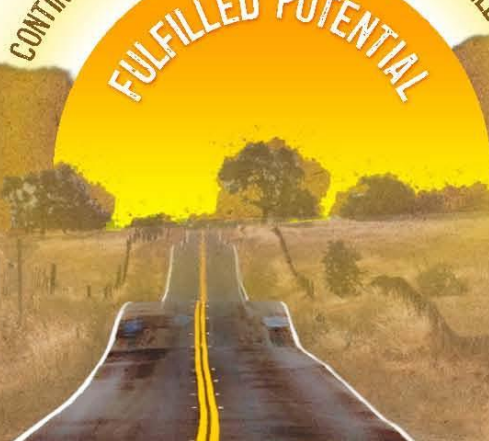
Youth will be on a road to a hopeful future...

...working towards their full potential. The evidence is measurement of goal management skills and thriving goals accomplished.

Along the road, youth:

Build positive, sustained adult youth relations, with high quality, high quantity time; Learn life skills that include self-reflection and goal management; Practice these skills in valued home, school and community activities.

Dr. Richard Lerner, Tufts



Sparks

- Special quality, skill, interest or talent that they are passionate about
- Sparks can change over time
- By the age of ten, all youth understand the concept of spark



Benson (2008)



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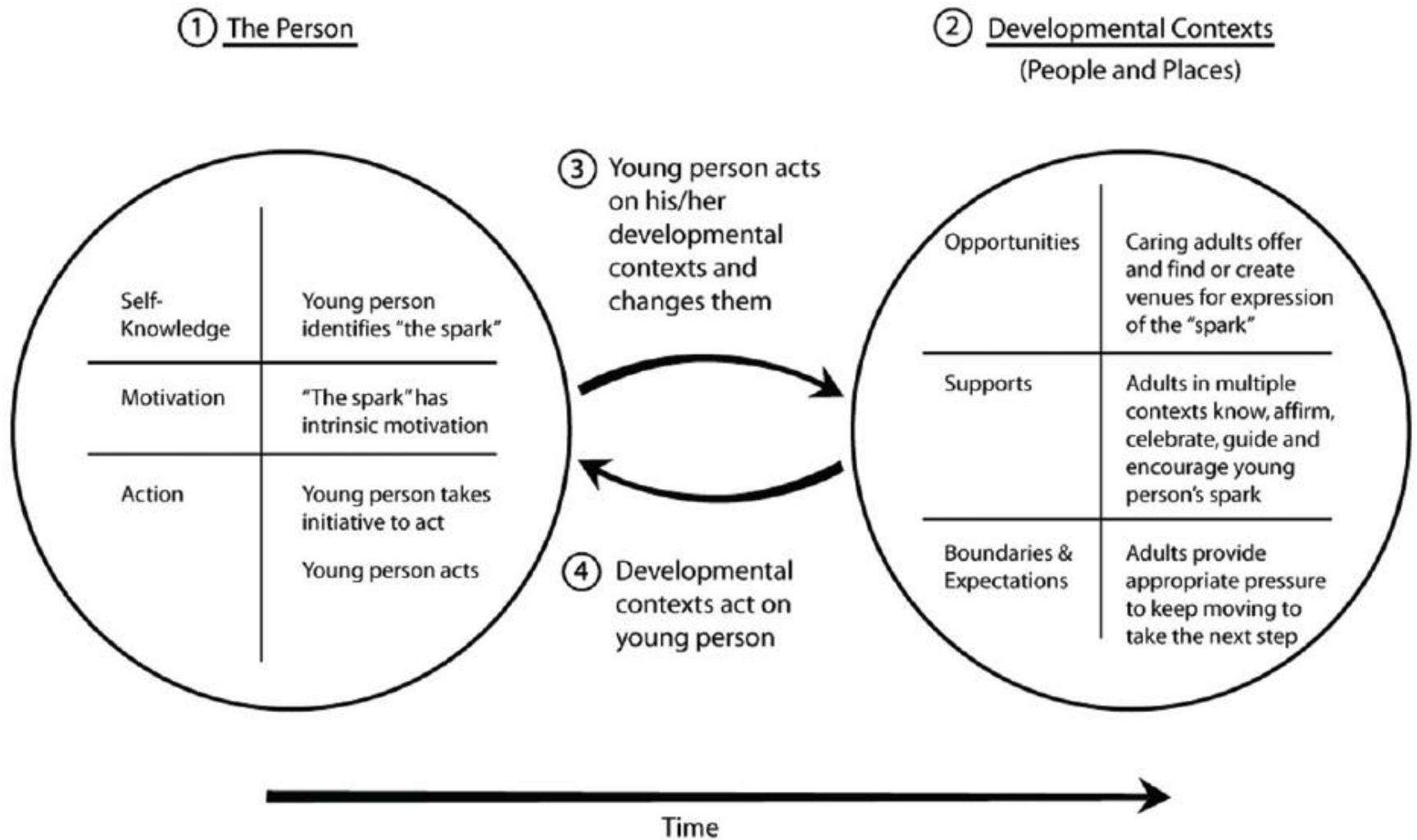


Figure 1. The dynamic process of thriving in adolescence.

Benson & Scales (2009)

Why do Sparks matter?

- Better academic outcomes
- Better psychological outcomes
- Better social outcomes
- Fewer risk-taking behaviors
- **THRIVING!**

Benson & Scales (2009); Scales (2010); Scales , Benson, & Roehlkepartain (2011)



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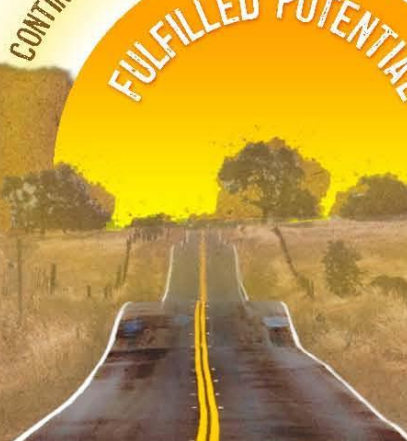
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Growth Mindset

“No matter who you are, you can change your intelligence a lot.”



Turning over a new leaf



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Fixed Mindset

“You have a certain amount of intelligence, and you really can’t do much to change it.”



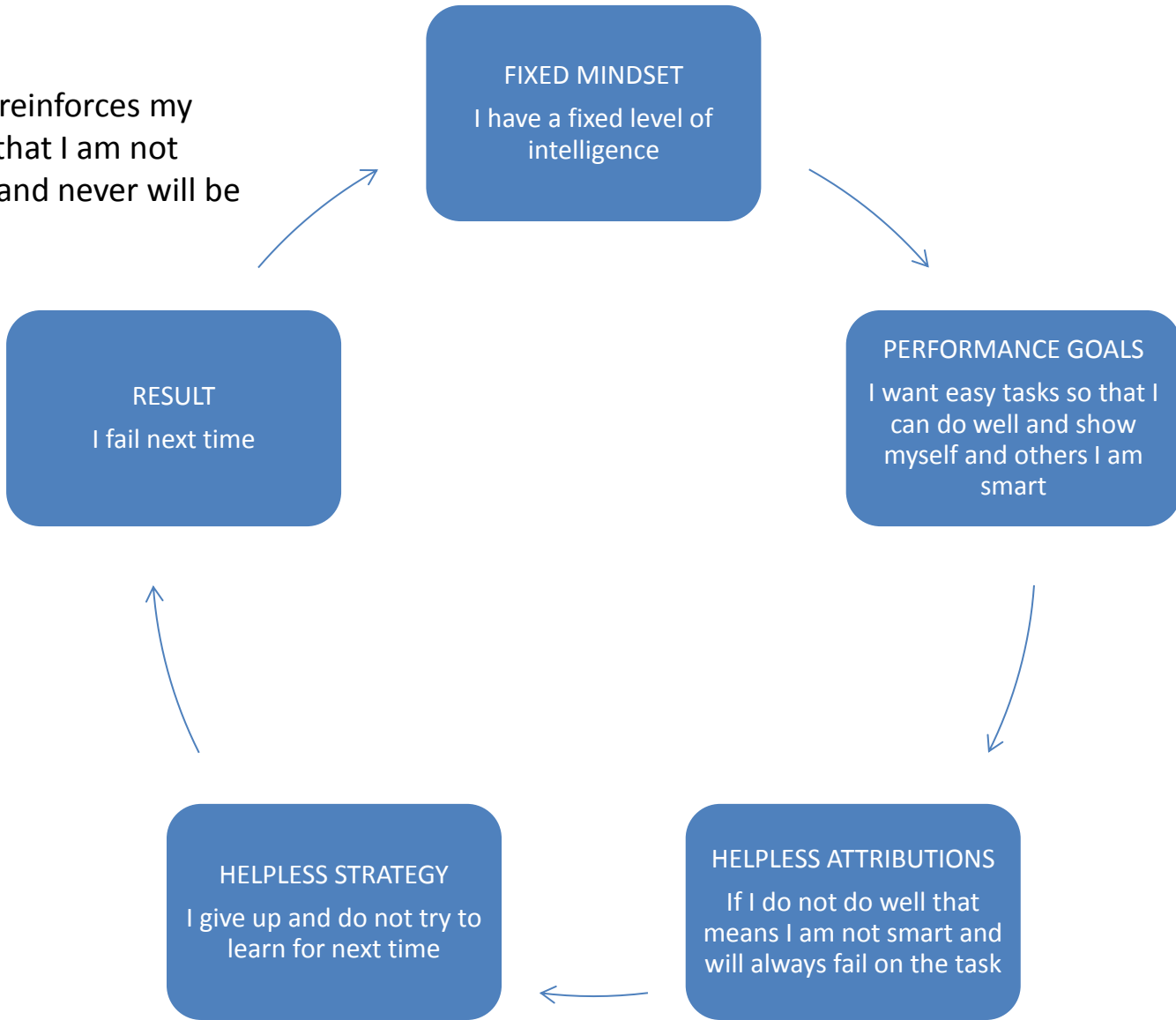
A leopard cannot change its spots



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which reinforces my belief that I am not smart and never will be



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which reinforces my belief that I can learn new things and get better

RESULT
I do better next time

GROWTH MINDSET
I can get smarter

LEARNING GOALS
I want challenging tasks so that I can learn and get smarter

MASTERY STRATEGY
I work harder next time

MASTERY ATTRIBUTIONS
If I do not do well that means I did not try hard enough



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Why does a Growth Mindset matter?

- Growth mindset interventions are shown to:
 - Improve math grades (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007)
 - Reduce gaps across marginalized groups in standardized testing (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003)
 - Improve school engagement and enjoyment, which led to higher grades (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002)
 - Reduced aggression and improved classroom behavior (Yeager, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, in press)
 - Reduce hostile intent attributions and aggressive desires (Yeager, Miu, Powers, & Dweck, in press)



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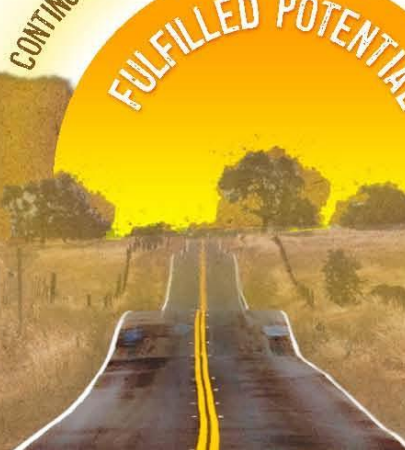
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Self-Reflection

- Meta-cognitive, higher order thinking process – an abstract skill
- Involves recreating and making sense of experience
(Dewey, 1910, 1916; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001; Kolb, Rubin, & McIntyre, 1971, 1974)
- Involves narrative, requires memory of feelings and thoughts



Why does Self-Reflection matter?

- Provides information for moving forward
- Increases motivation and ownership of learning
- Adaptive – associated with emotional clarity, and emotional regulation
- Leads to goal clarity and problem solving orientation
- Self-reflective narrative supports sense of self and can have positive health impacts (Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2009; Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999)



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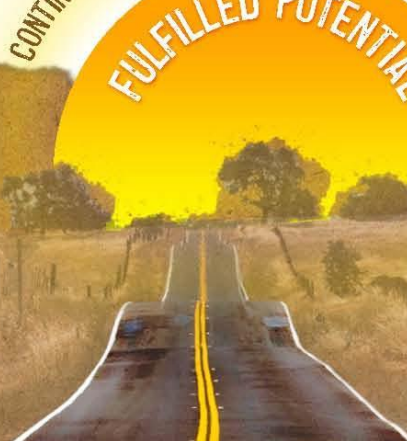
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Goal Management Skills

- Intentional self-regulation is a core facet of human functioning
- Adaptive relations between the individual and the context is key for successful development
- Three sets of actions comprise intentional self-regulatory processes
 - Selection
 - Optimization
 - Compensation

Lerner, Freund, De Stefanis, & Habermas (2001)



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GPS Model

Goal Selection

Choosing Your Destination

Pursuit of Strategies

Sticking to a Plan * Showing Persistent Effort * Checking Your Progress

Shifting Gears

Substituting Strategies * Seeking Different Help



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Why do Goal Management Skills matter?

- Youth who build and apply these GPS skills are more likely to reach their goals
- Positively related to positive developmental outcomes and negatively related to negative developmental outcomes during adolescence

(Gestsdóttir & Lerner, 2007; Gestsdóttir, Lewin-Bizan, von Aye, Lerner, & Lerner, 2009; Mueller, Phelps, Bowers, Agans, Ubran, & Lerner, 2011; Zimmerman, Phelps, & Lerner, 2008)



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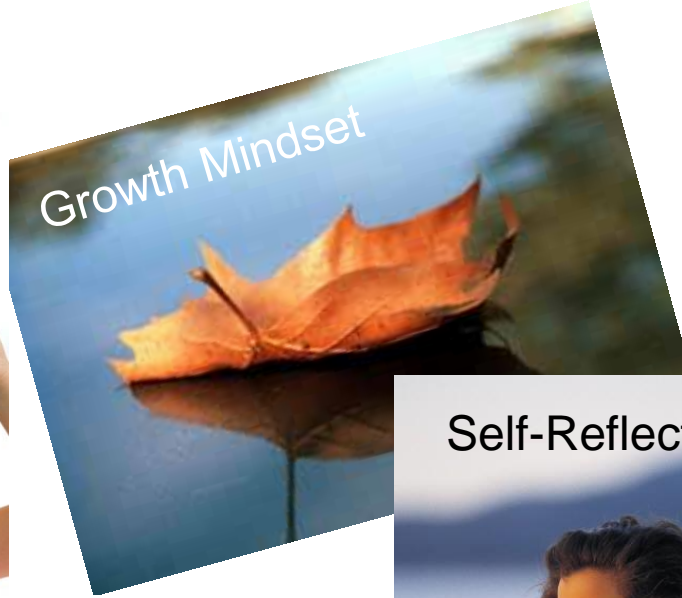
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Research Question

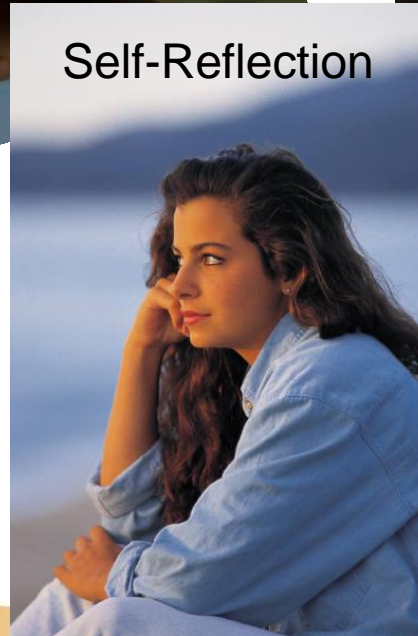
Sparks



Growth Mindset



Self-Reflection



Goal Management



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4-H Thrive Rollout Plan

- ❖ Program Improvement
- ❖ Volunteer Development
- ❖ Data Collection
- ❖ Outreach



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2010

- ❖ Built 4-H capacity and infrastructure
- ❖ Developed Training Design
- ❖ Developed Educational Materials



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2011

- ❖ Launched Educational Materials
- ❖ Trained Master Trainers
- ❖ Master Trainers trained Project Leaders



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2012

- ❖ Launched 2nd year Educational Materials
- ❖ Continued Master Trainer Model
- ❖ Developed Online Trainings



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2013

- ❖ Launch 3rd year Educational Materials
- ❖ Continue volunteer development
- ❖ Develop Afterschool Educational Materials



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2014+

- ❖ Launch 4th year and compilation Educational Materials
- ❖ Develop Camp Educational Materials
- ❖ Develop Outreach Materials



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Program Improvement



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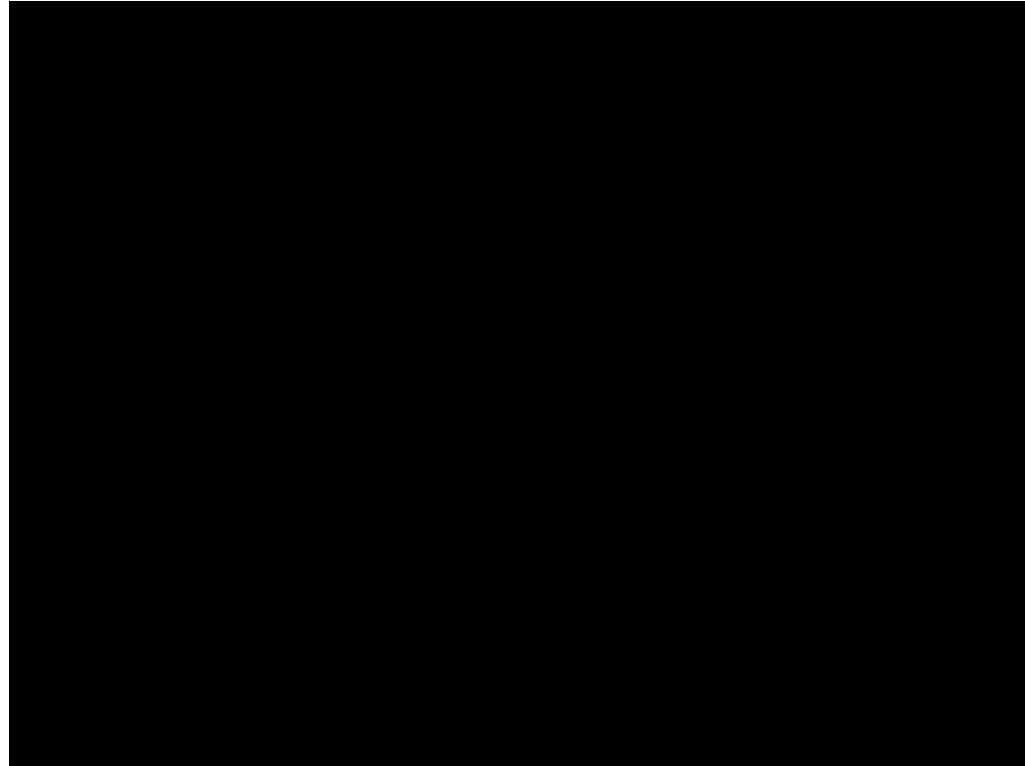
Junior and Teen Leadership Development Projects



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Theory into Action



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Train-the-Trainer

- ❖ Sustainability
- ❖ Training
- ❖ Roll out



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Master Trainer Support

4-H Thrive Virtual Trainings

iDevelop

iDevelop is the Virtual Training Center of our 4-H Thrive program. The purpose of iDevelop is to provide training around positive youth development and to assist 4-H staff and volunteers in creating and sustaining healthy environments for our 4-H members to reach their full potential. Below is a brief description of the trainings, click on the link to access the training.

Foundations of Positive Youth Development

The purpose of this training is to explore the role of positive youth development in our 4-H programs and to identify where 4-H Thrive fits in our 4-H Vision. This training is approximately 60 minutes long. [Click here](#) to take the training.



Helping Youth Discover Their Spark

The purpose of this training is to define what a spark is and its importance in the lives of young people, discuss the role of a spark champion and learn how to have a spark conversation with young people. This training is approximately 15 minutes long. [Click here](#) to take the training.

Understanding the G.P.S. Goal Management System

The purpose of this training is to define goal management, introduce the G.P.S. process and practice using the G.P.S. model of Goal Management. This training is approximately 15 minutes long. [Click here](#) to take the training.

Growth Mindset Training

The purpose of this training is to define what a growth mindset and a fixed mindset are and are not.

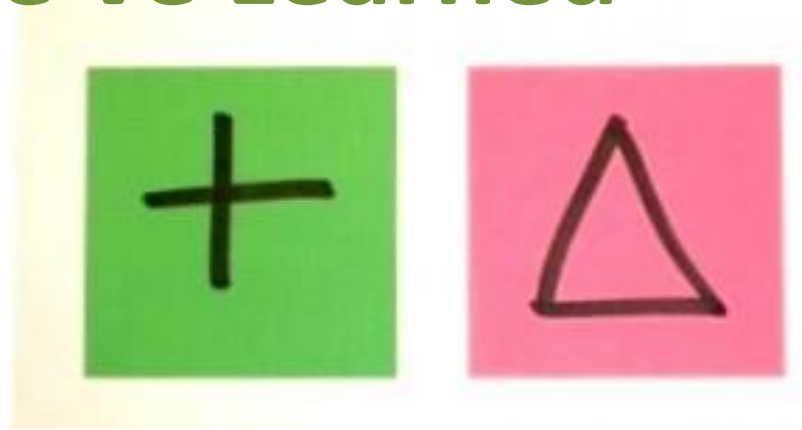
A screenshot of the 4-H Volunteer Cafe website. The page has a dark, textured background. At the top, there are navigation links: Home, Thriving@Work, Ice Breakers, Discussion Starters, Sample Agreements, and Facilitation Tips. The main heading is "4-H VOLUNTEER CAFE" in large, bold, white letters. Below it is the subtitle "A resource site for our 4-H Thrive leadership". There is a "stay updated via rss" link with a RSS icon. A red arrow points to a link that says "About 4-H Volunteer Cafe". Below this is a "WELCOME TO THE CAFE!" section with the tagline "Head, Heart, Hands, Health. Growing Youth who Thrive." and a graphic of the state of California with a green 4-H clover on it. To the right of the graphic is the text "100 Years and thriving" and "University of California". Below the welcome message is a paragraph of text and a small "ABOUT 4-H" section. At the bottom, there is a quote: "Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer." -Author Unknown. On the left side of the page, there are sections for "LATEST POSTS" and "CATEGORIES" with a list of links.



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What We've Learned



- ❖ This is hard work and it's going to take a lot of persistent effort.
- ❖ Our 4-H Culture is beginning to shift
- ❖ Young people are being impacted in positive ways as a result of the thriving principles.
- ❖ We need to continue to find ways to support staff and master trainers in more effective ways



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Data Collection

Online Record Book UC 4-H Youth Development • 2011 - 2012 Program Year

Personal Development | Projects | Profile | Club Info

0 | 2 | Help | Logout

Recent News

Add: [Motto](#) [Photo/Video](#) [Activity](#) [Award](#) [Expense/Income](#) [Message](#)

- Scott Mautte** 12 hours ago State Administrator
Reported an activity: [ORB Training #2 Paper vs. Electric](#)
You promoted this
- Steven Worker** 12 hours ago
Reported a Project Meeting: [Photography meeting](#)
- Scott Mautte** 13 hours ago State Administrator
Reported an activity: [ORB Training #2 Paper vs. Electric](#)
Nathaniel Fredricks and Sue Hopkins promoted this
- Steven Worker** 13 hours ago
Reported a [Club Meeting](#) for the club Beta Testing Team
- Steven Worker** 13 hours ago
★ Received an award! [Gold Seal on Presentation](#)
- Steven Worker** 13 hours ago
Reported an activity: [How to Mount a Photograph](#)
- Jon Wilson** 23 hours ago
Reported an activity: [Up falls](#)

Ironhide Prime

No Photo

- 2 Clubs
- 0 Projects
- 0 Activities
- 0 Spark Score
- 0 Hours

Youth | Club Officer | Vice President

4-H Alert!

Bug Report

Are you experiencing a problem with ORB? Check out the [ORB Manual](#), [email ORB support](#), or [submit a bug report](#).

Boost Your Spark Score!

Complete the questions to add points to your Spark Score! These points can be used to receive a special 100-year pin or a chance to win an iPad!

Spark Score Questions

- [Contribution](#)
- [Flex your brain](#)
- [How I feel](#)
- [Light your spark](#)
- [Reach Your Goals](#)

Bonus Score Questions!

Boost your Spark Score further by completing the [bonus questions!](#)



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Are Youth Thriving?

Year 1 Initial Results



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Goals

- To test whether *4-H Thrive!* improves positive youth development
- Understand the conditions under which the greatest gains are achieved

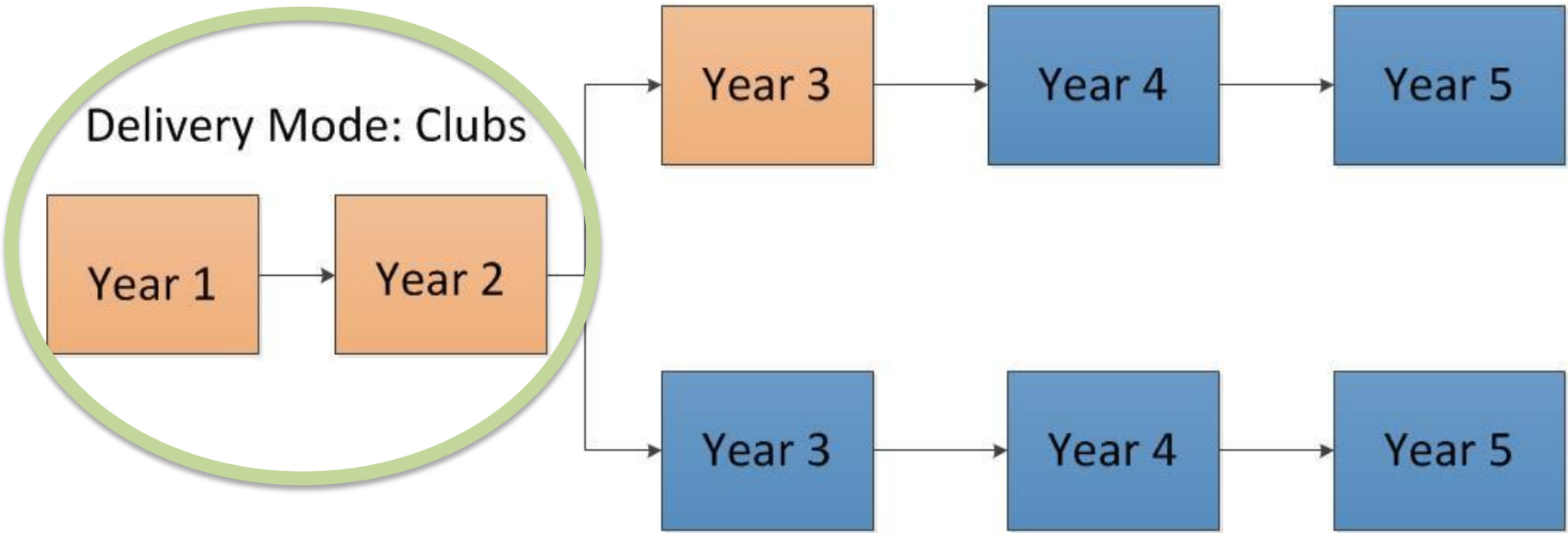


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Overall Design

Delivery Mode: Clubs



Delivery Mode: Afterschool Programs



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Year 1 Sample

- 492 4-H youth in California
 - Ages 9-19
- 321 non-Thrive 9th grade community youth comparison sample

	4-H	Community
Age (mean)	14.25 years	14.33 years
Female	66.9 %	55.0%
Hispanic	11.5%	26.9 %
White	90.7%	58.5%
Black	0.7%	5.5%
Asian	3.0%	23.3%
Other	5.4%	6.6%



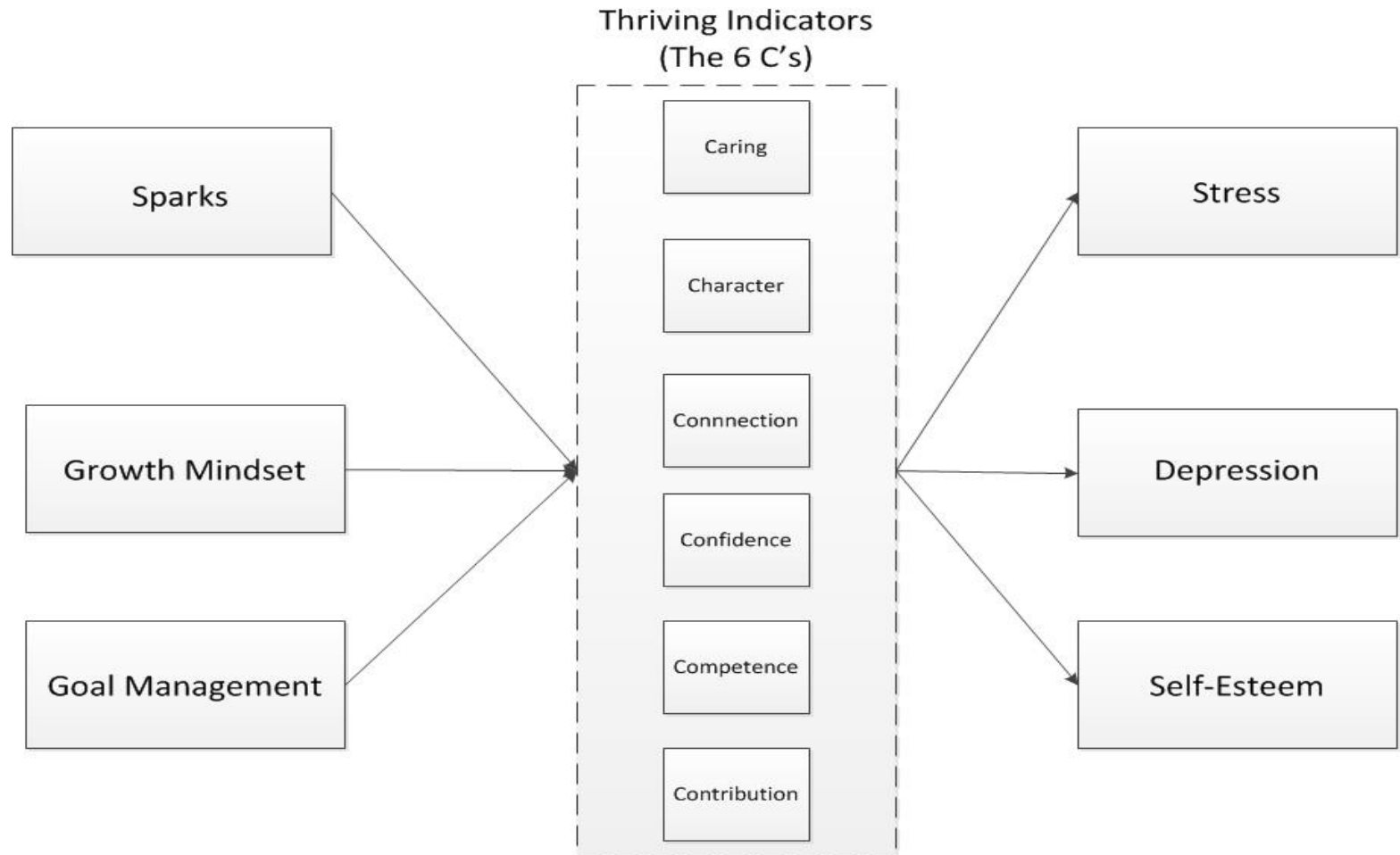
Year 2 Sample

	Year 2
Age (mean)	13.25 years
Female	66.2%
Hispanic	10.7%
White	89.3%
Black	0.7%
Asian	4.1%
Other	5.9%

- 585 4-H youth in California
 - Ages 9-19
- 124 longitudinal youth



Theoretical Model



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4-H environment fosters positive youth development

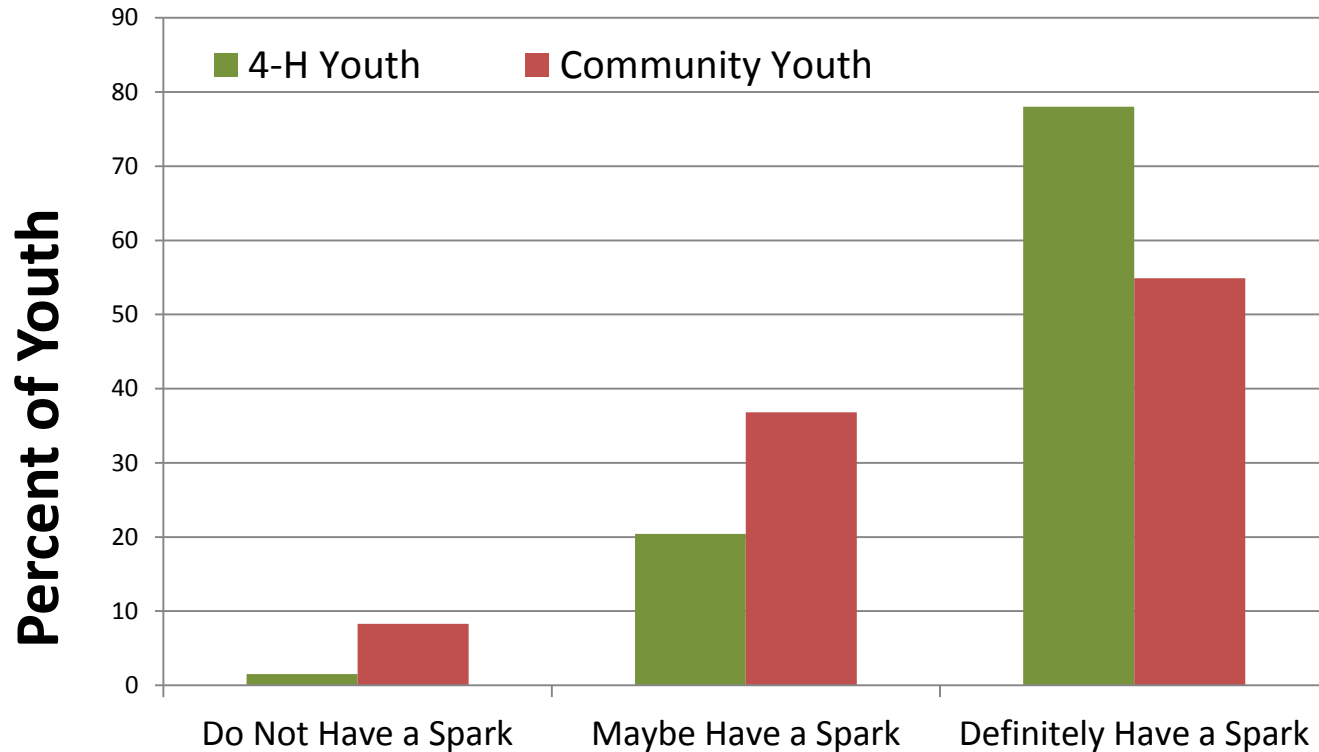
So, do 4-H youth start out higher than non-4-H youth?



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More 4-H Youth Identify a Spark



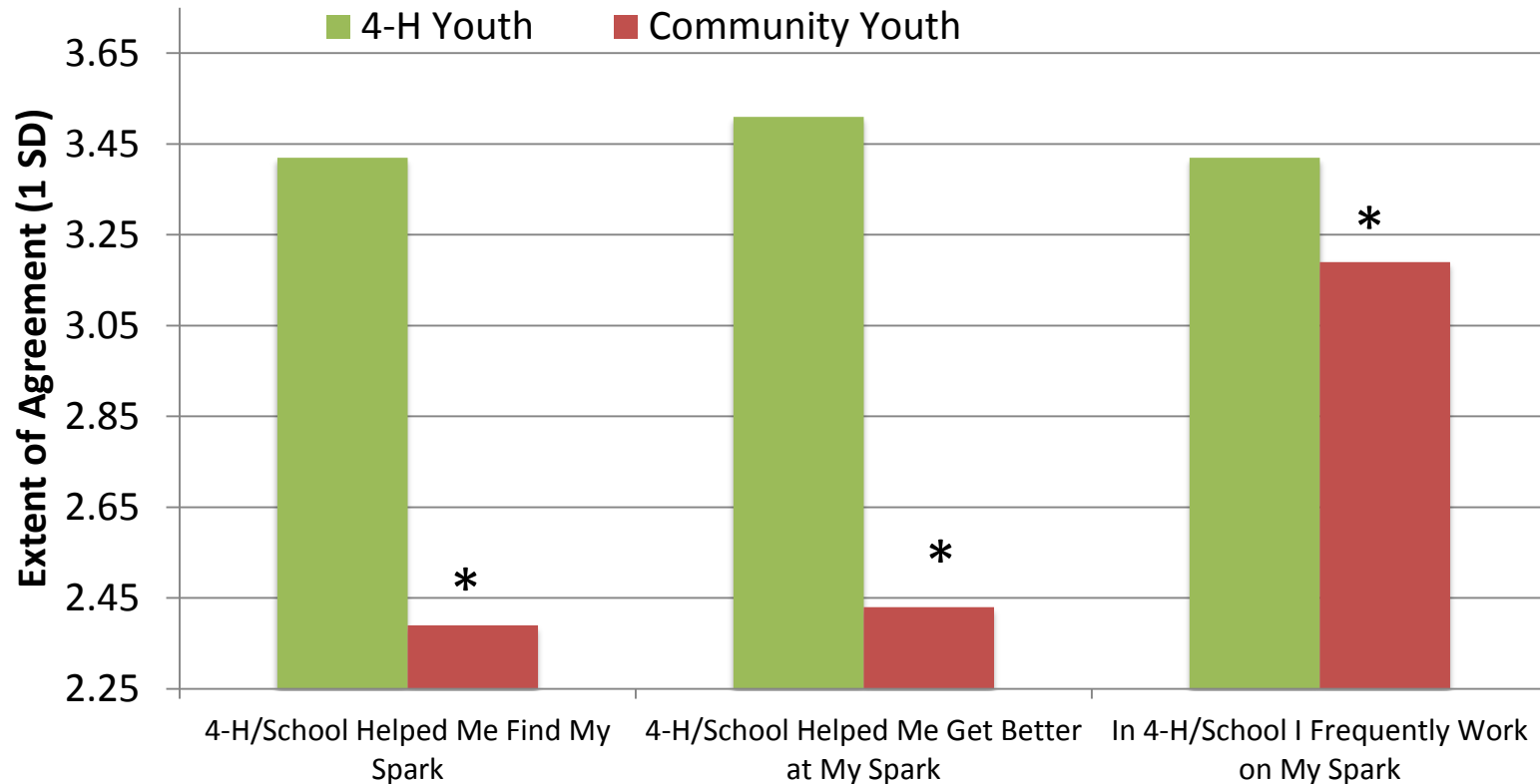
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$\chi^2=52.49, p<.05$

4-H helps youth develop their spark



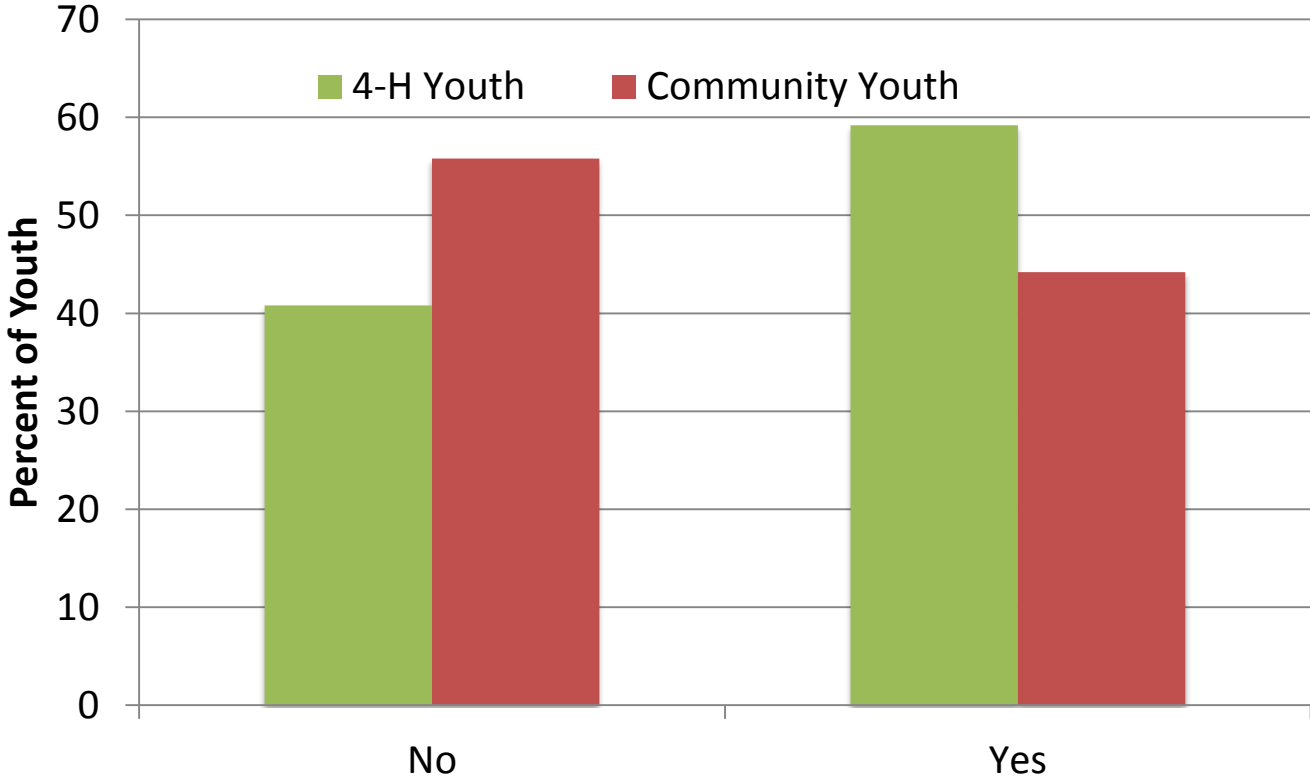
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* $p < .05$

4-H youth are more likely to say they have a caring adult or peer who helps them develop their spark

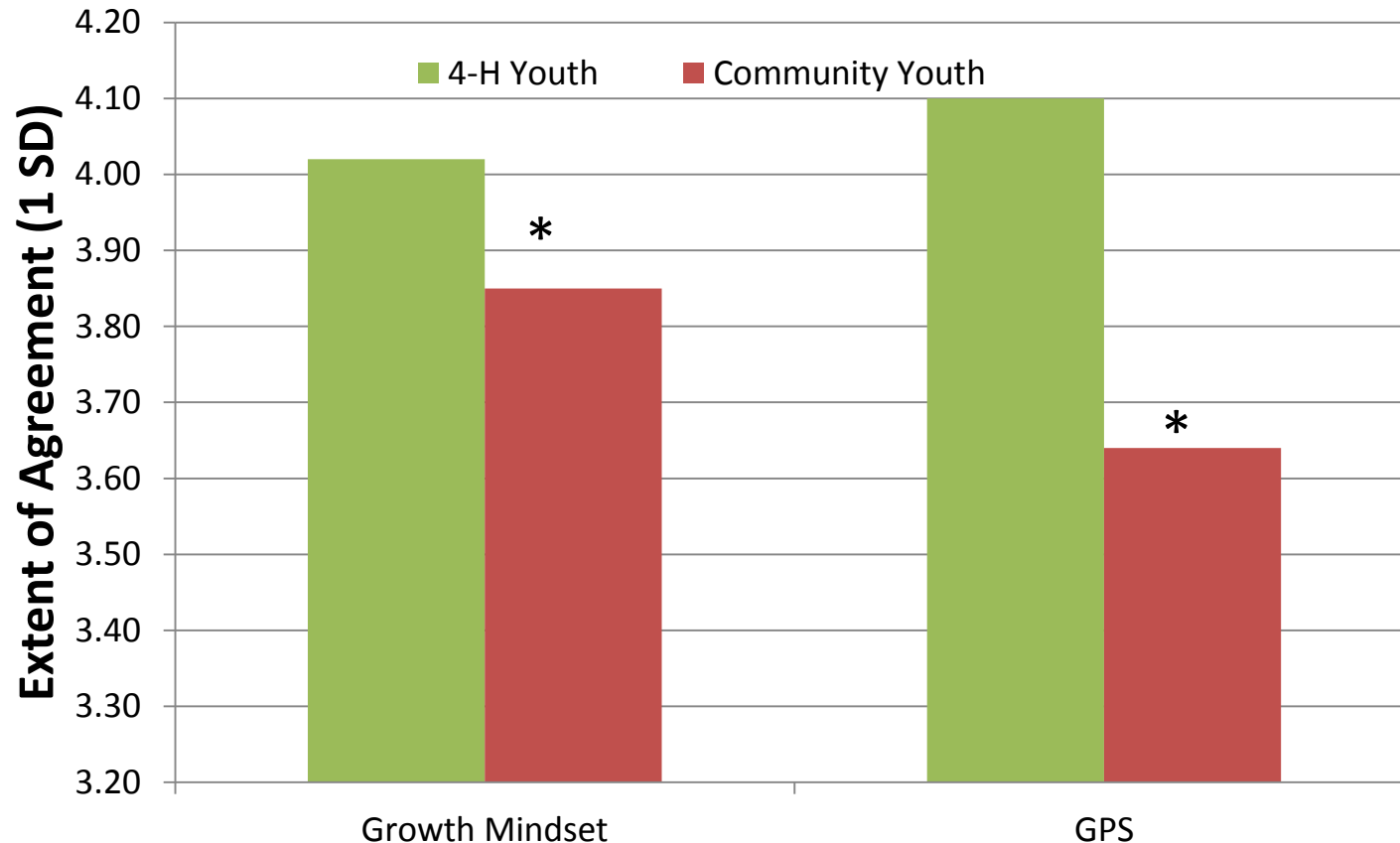


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$\chi^2=15.95, p<.05$

4-H youth have more of a growth mindset and more positive goal management



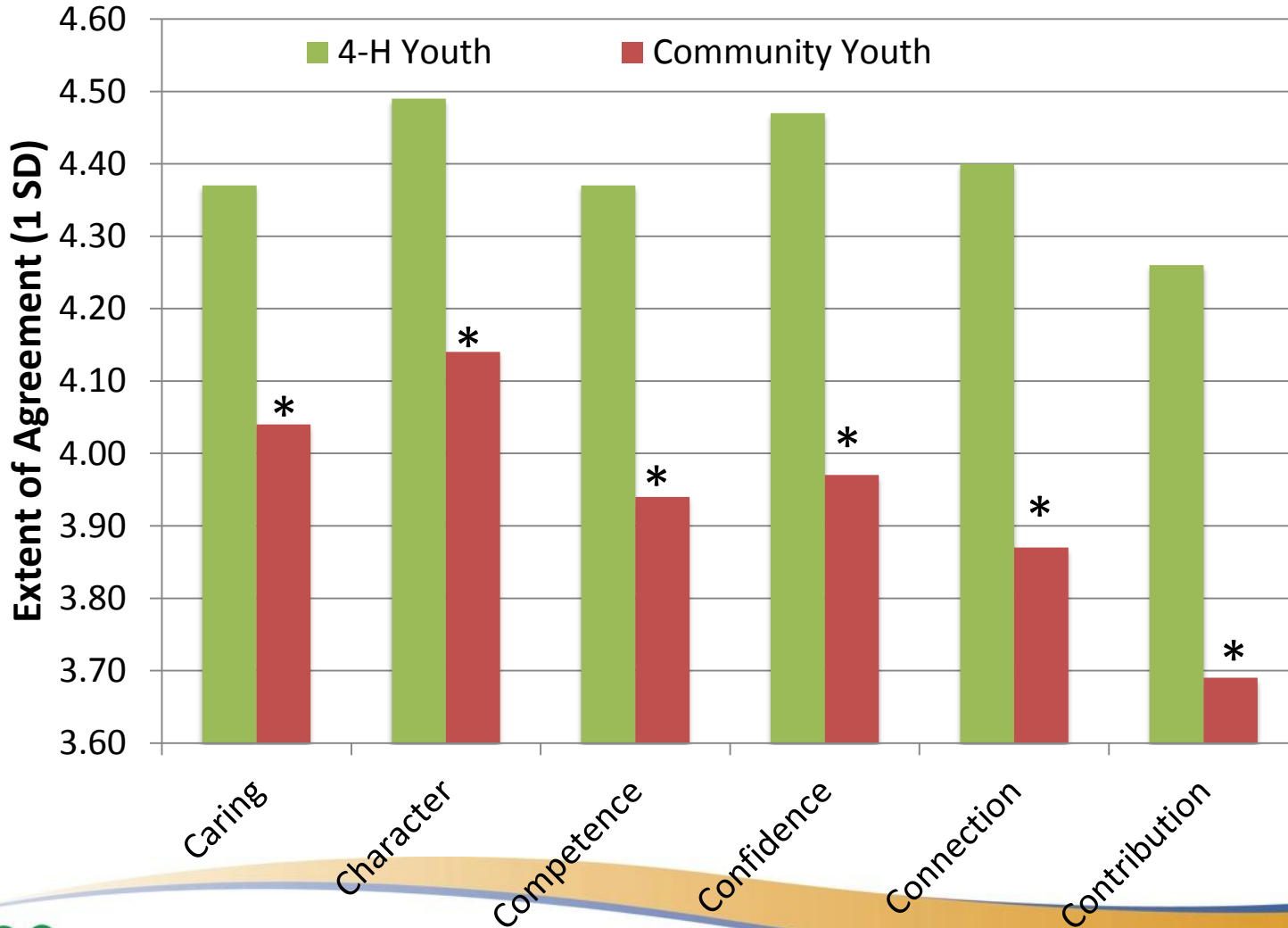
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* $p < .05$

4-H youth are higher on all of the 6 C's



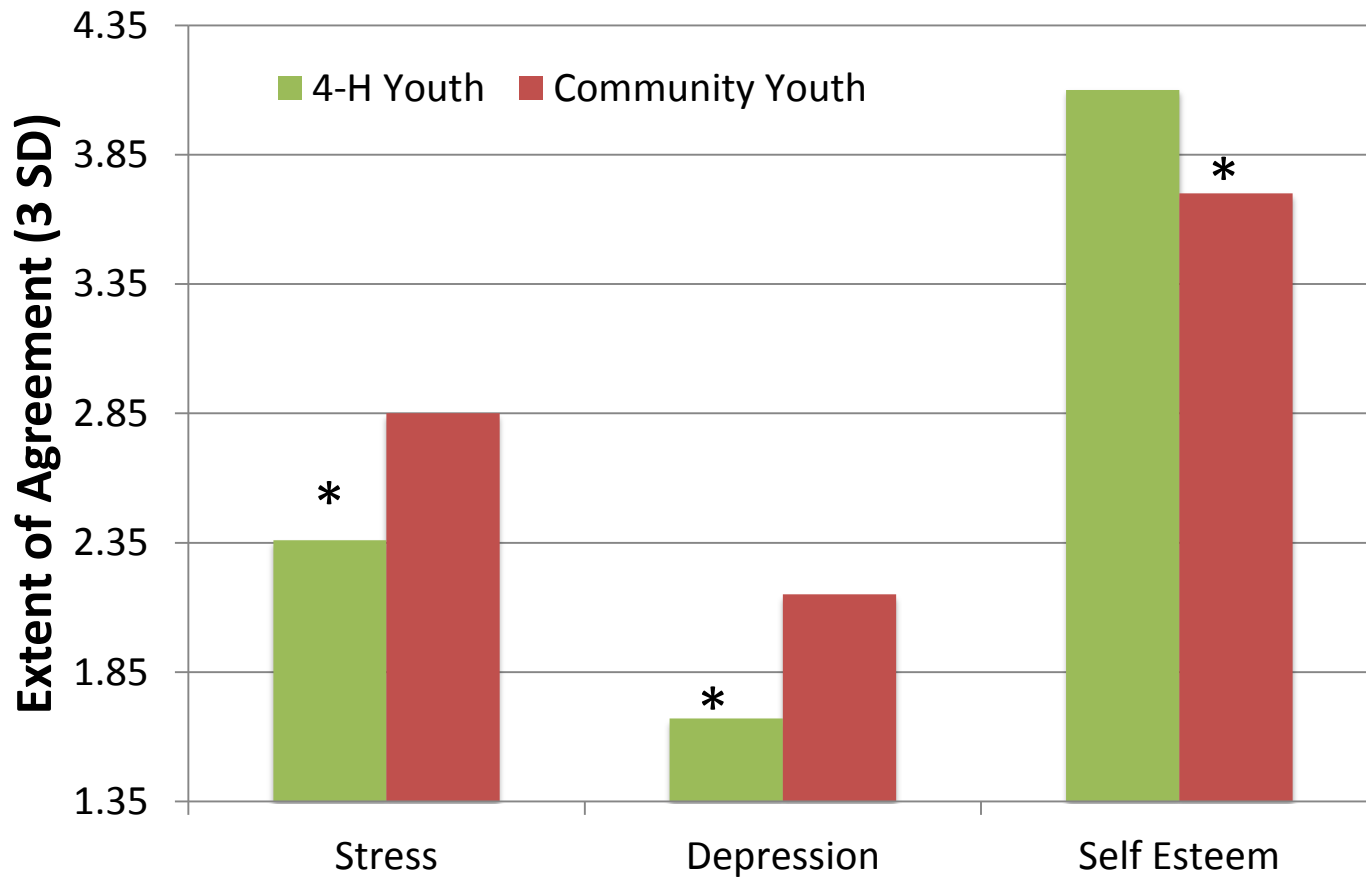
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* $p < .05$

4-H youth have better adjustment outcomes



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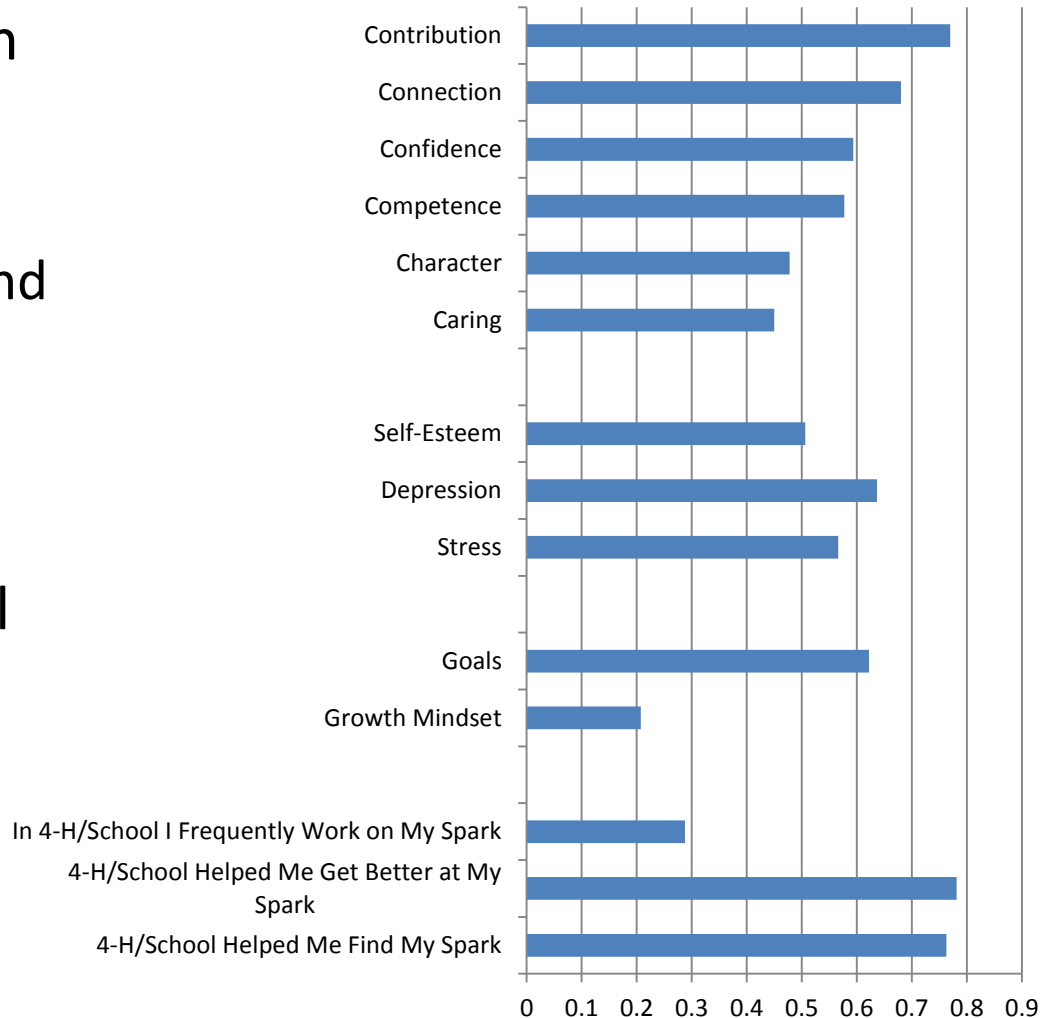
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* $p < .05$

Summary

- 4-H youth are higher on all aspects of positive youth development
 - ❖ Primarily in finding and developing sparks
 - ❖ Contribution
 - ❖ Goal management
- We could improve in all areas, but especially in growth mindset and caring

Effect Size Comparing 4-H to Community



4-H Thrive! Year 1

Did *4-H Thrive!* increase the program components?



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Yes, 4-H Thrive!

Increased Several Components

	Any Change
Sparks	53.4%
Mindset	50.6%
Goal Management	62.7%
Thriving Indicators	58.2%



Yes, 4-H Thrive!

Increased Several Components

	Any Change	Reliable Change
Sparks	53.4%	12.7%
Mindset	50.6%	13.0%
Goal Management	62.7%	20.8%
Thriving Indicators	58.2%	10.6%



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Did *increasing* on 4-H Thrive! components lead to higher levels of thriving at Year 2?

Year 1- Year 2 Increase

Year 2 Level

Sparks

$\beta = .20^*$

Mindset

$\beta = .15$

Goals

$\beta = .45^*$

More Thriving at
Time 2!



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* $p < .05$

Did *increasing* on 4-H Thrive! components lead to *increases* in thriving at Year 2?

Year 1- Year 2 increase

Year 1- Year 2 increase

Sparks

$\beta = .23^*$

Mindset

$\beta = .17$

Goals

$\beta = .51^*$

More Thriving



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* $p < .05$

Yes, 4-H Thrive!

Increased Several Components

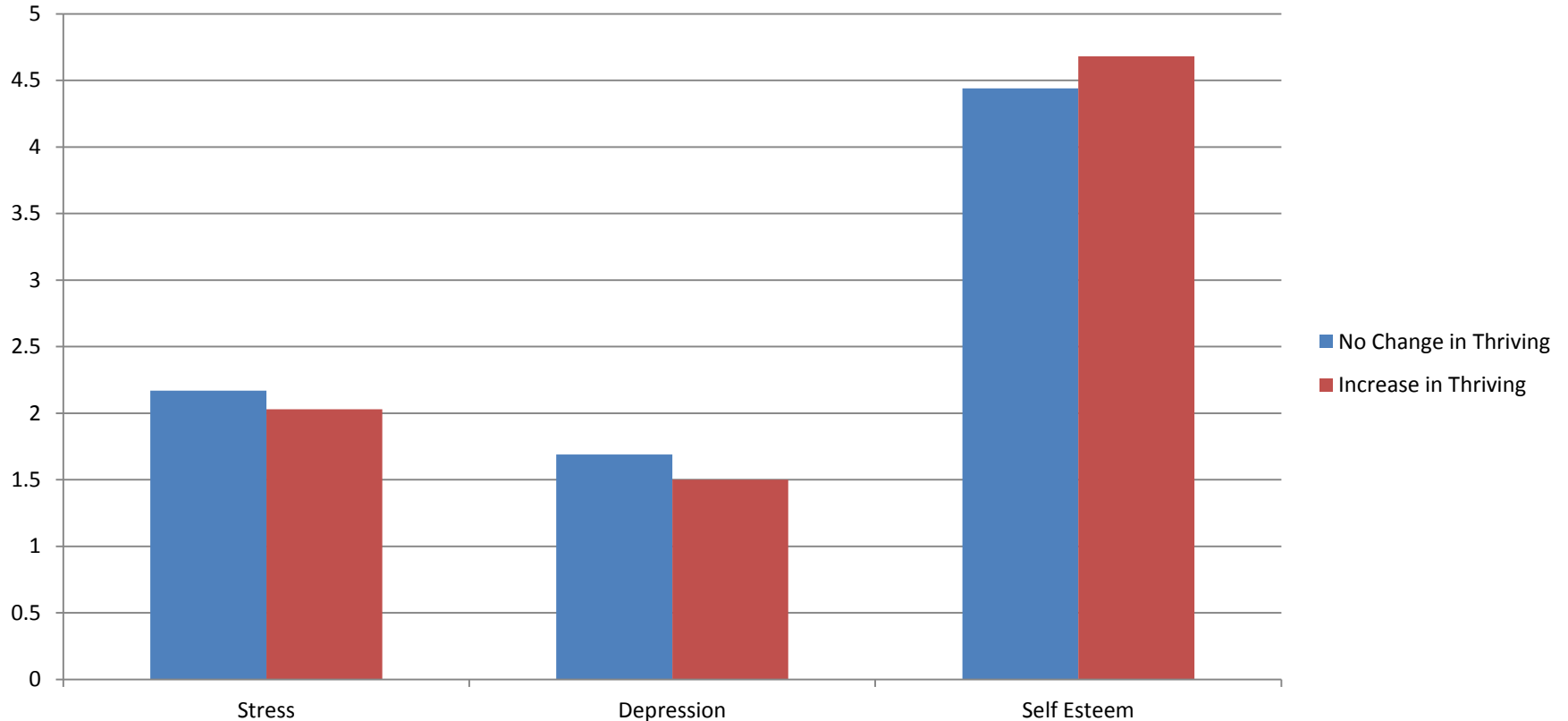
	Any Change	Reliable Change
Sparks	53.4%	12.7%
Mindset	50.6%	13.0%
Goal Management	62.7%	20.8%
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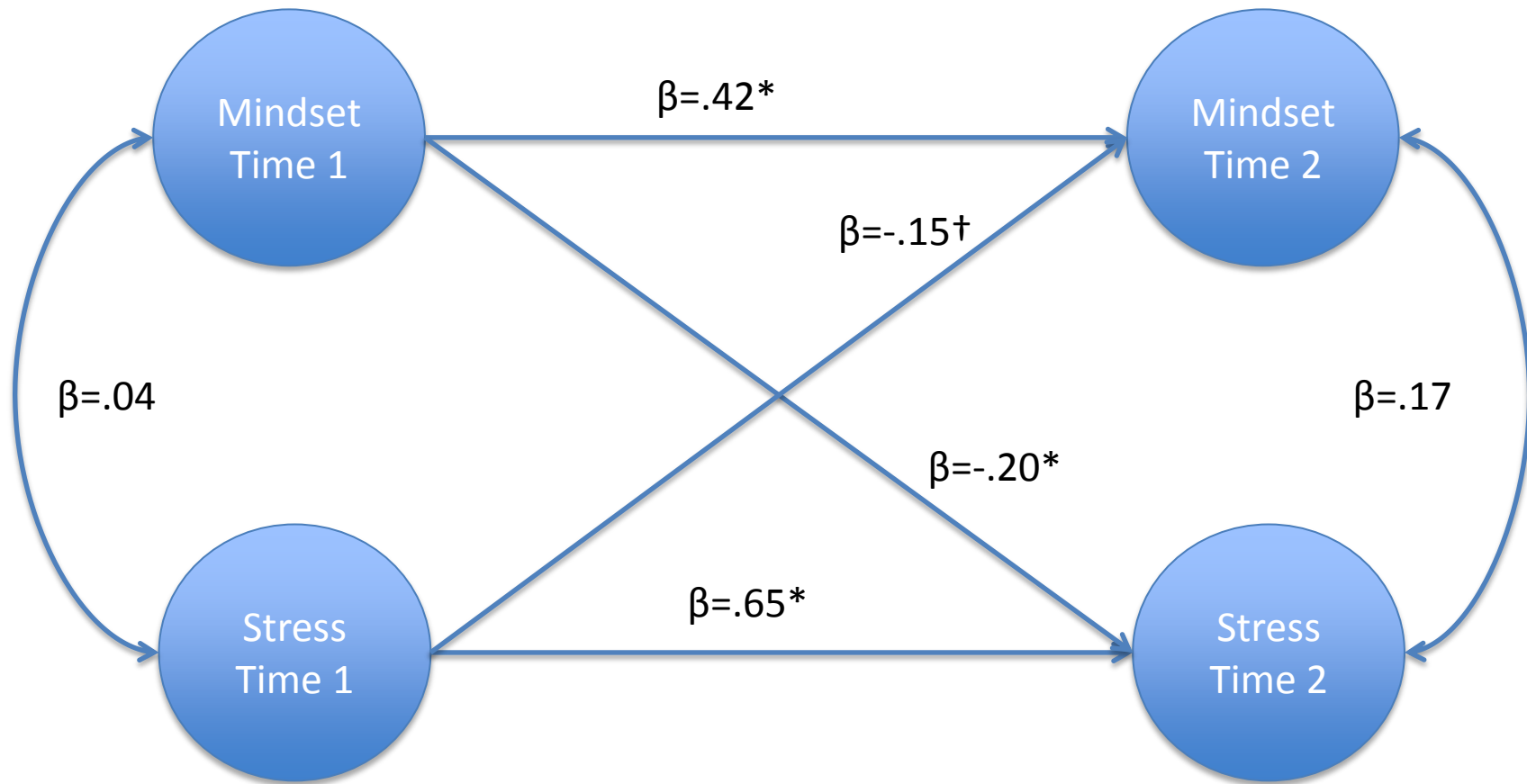
Changes in Thriving & Adjustment Outcomes



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Cross Lagged Models

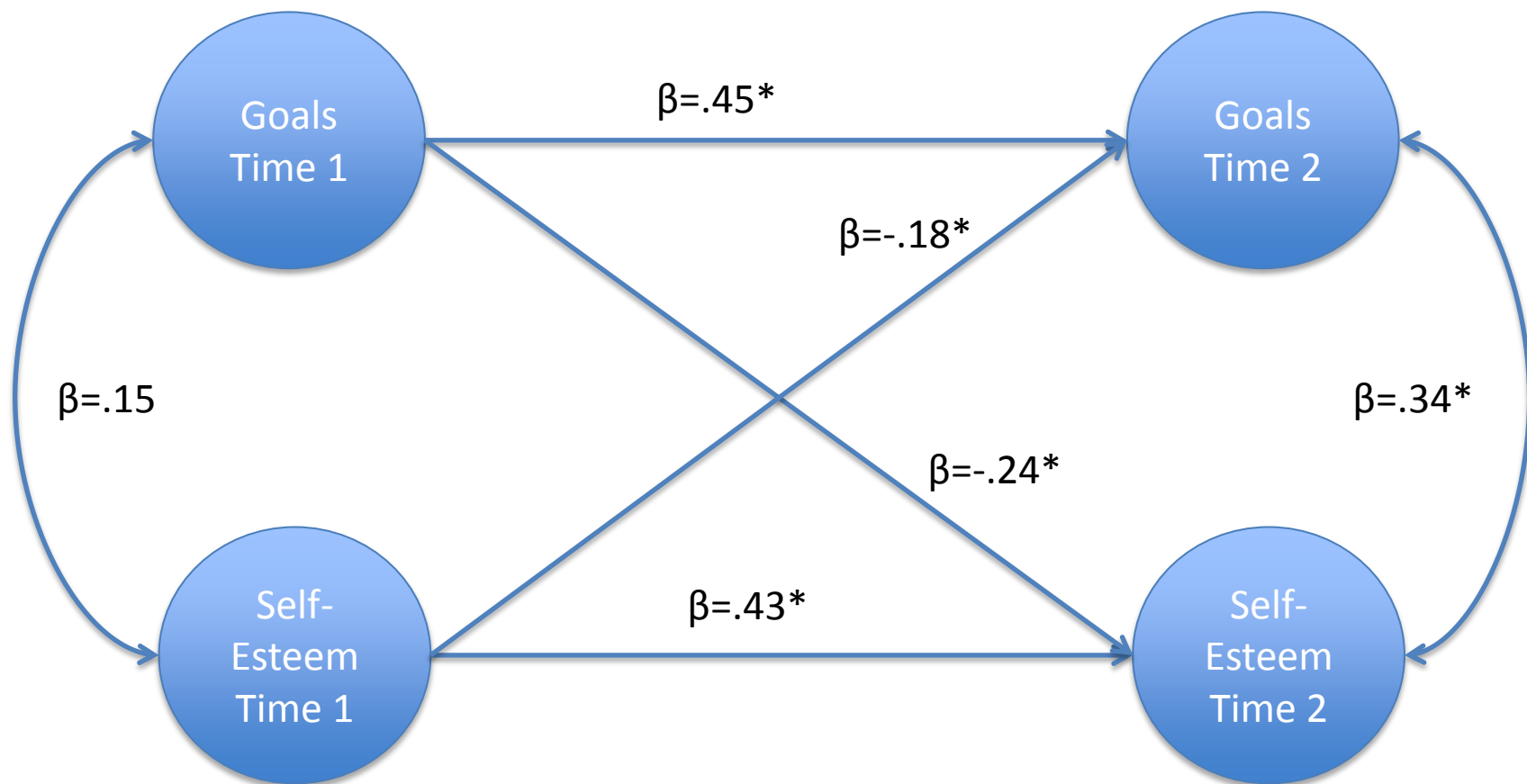


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$^\dagger p < .10$, $^* p < .05$

Cross Lagged Models



4-H Thrive! Year 1

Youth enrolled in *4-H Thrive!* Projects experience growth in...

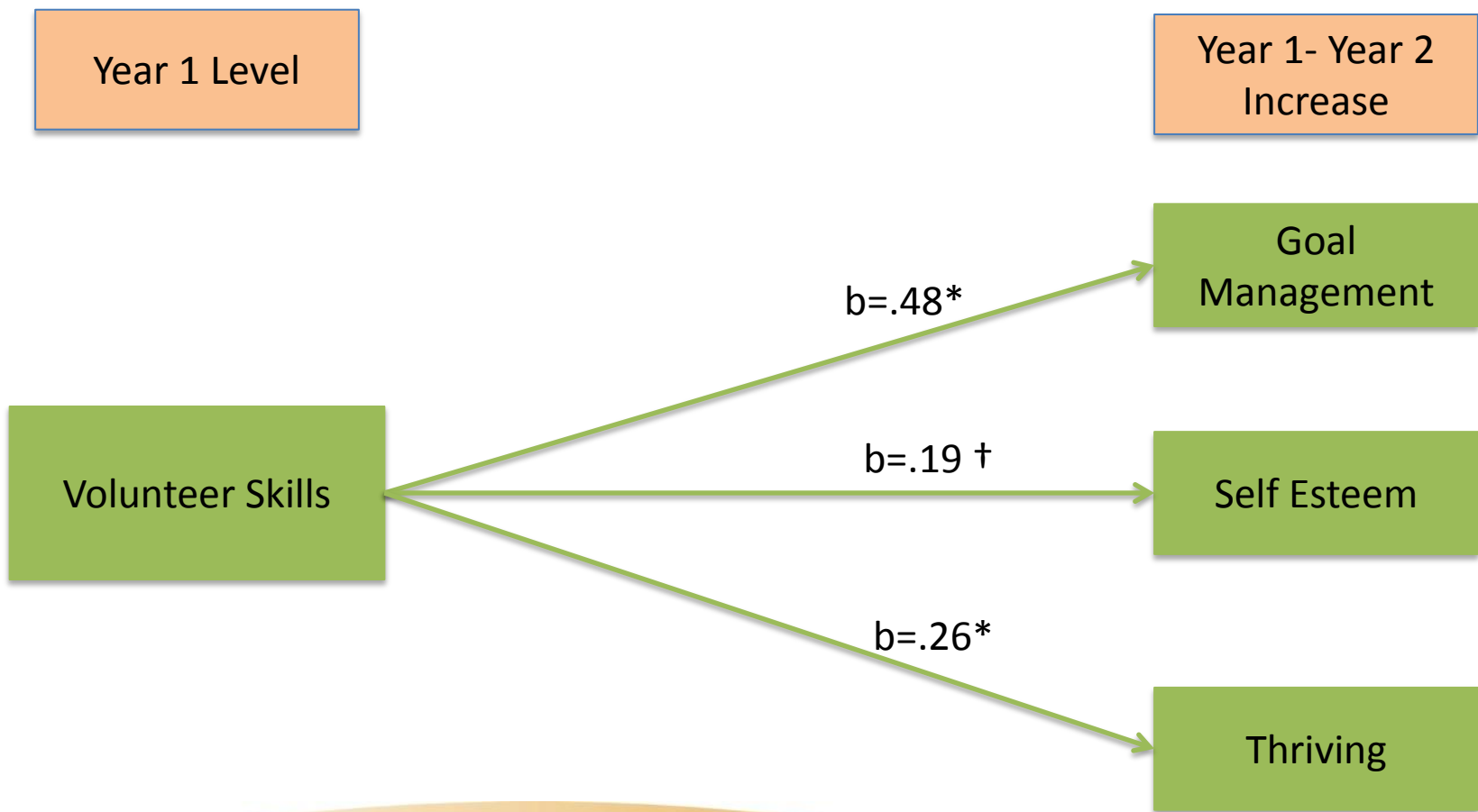
Can more engaged volunteers improve these outcomes?



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Yes, more engaged volunteers make a difference!

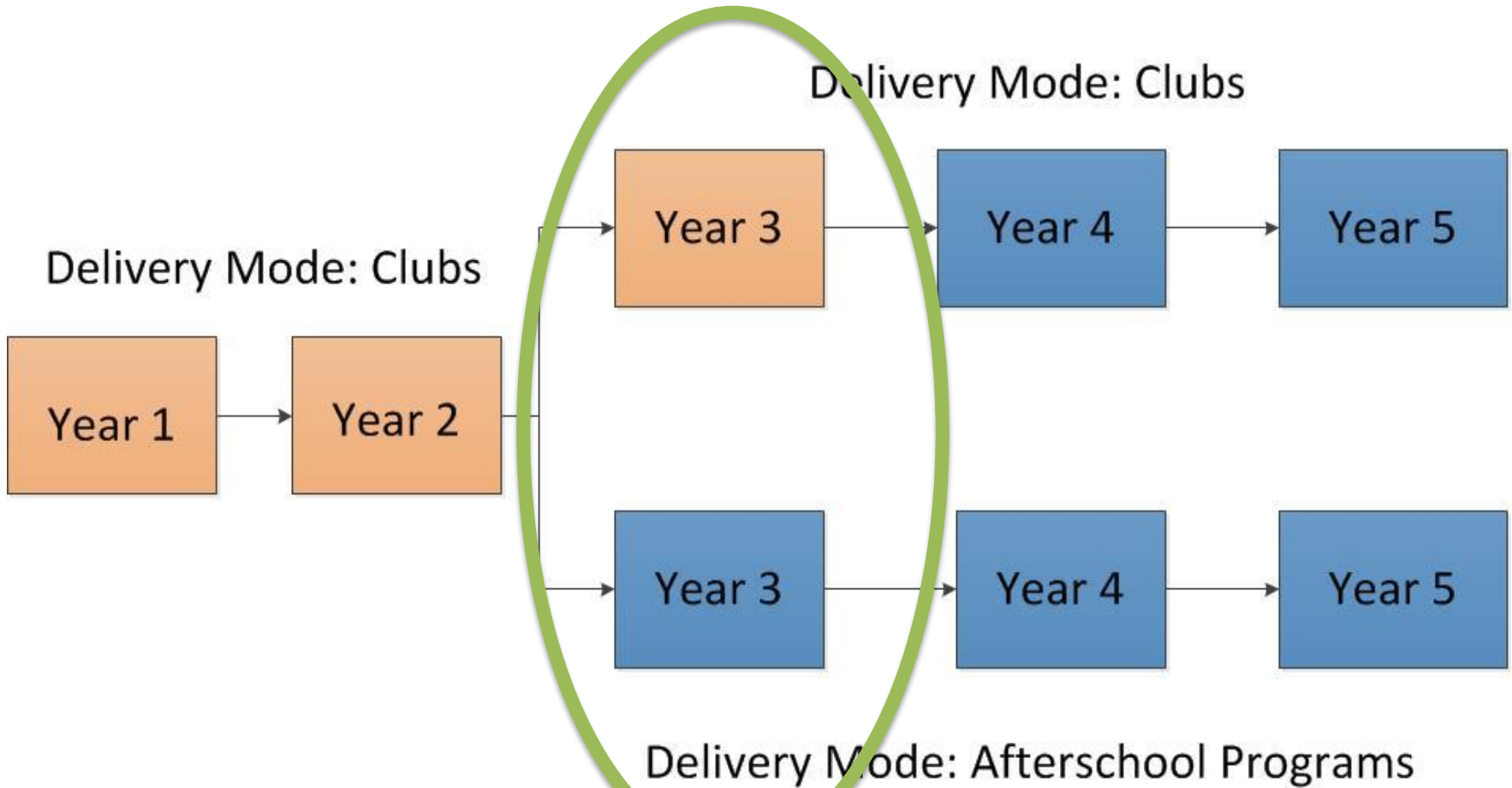


Summary of findings

- 4-H youth are higher than community youth on positive youth development
- We see positive changes in program components
 - These changes are also associated with better adjustment outcomes
- Volunteer skills make a difference



Looking Forward



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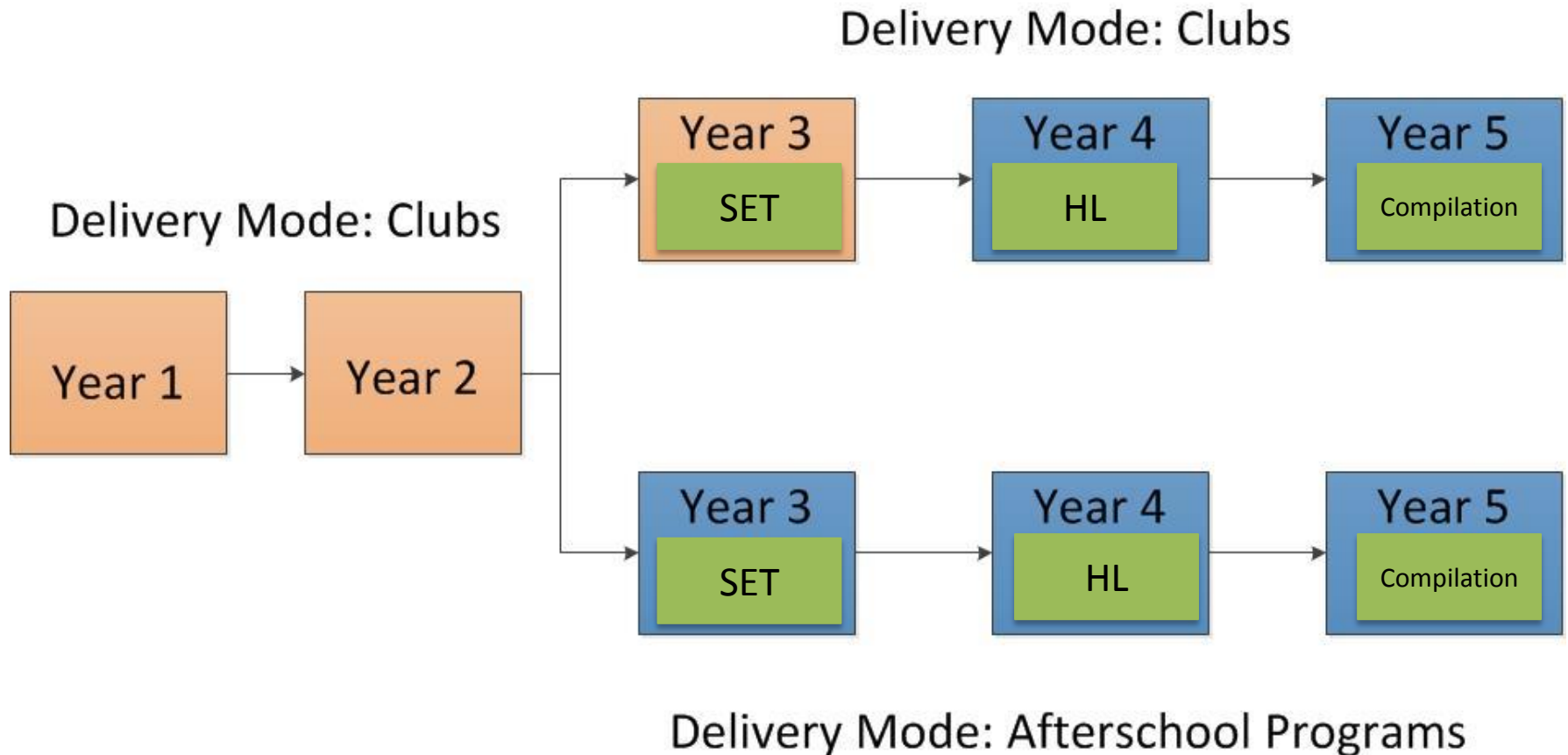
Looking Forward-Video Data



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Future Measures



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Future Directions

- Collecting more longitudinal data will allow us to
 - Test the theoretical model more fully
 - Better understand the mechanisms and processes
- Collecting data from a control group will
 - Allow us to better understand if and how the Thrive program is working.



How can the 4-H YD Program and other youth development programs best promote positive youth development with demonstrated impacts on individuals, families and communities?

- Begun to explore that creating change can lead to better thriving
- If youth are stronger, so are families and communities



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Sample Questions

- *Sparks:*
 - The 4-H program helped me find my spark(s)
 - The 4-H program helped me get better at my spark(s)
 - Not at all (1) to A lot (5)
- *Mindset*
 - You can learn new things but you can't really change your basic intelligence
 - You can always greatly change how intelligent you are
 - Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)



Sample Questions

- *Goal Management*
 - Sticking to a plan
 - Showing persistent effort
 - Seeking different help
 - I don't do this (1) to I consistently show initiative and I'm excellent at this skill (5)
- *Thriving*
 - Connection with family & caring adults, peers, etc.
 - Academic skills, love of learning, social skills, healthy habits
 - Sense of self worth, confidence in appearance
 - Moral compass & integrity
 - Service to community, leadership roles



Sample Questions

- Stress
 - In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
 - Never (1) to Very often (5)
- Depression
 - During the past week, I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing
 - Rarely or none of the time [less than 1 day] (1) to Most of all of the time [5-7 days] (5)
- Self-esteem
 - I feel that I have a number of good qualities
 - Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)



Year 1 Means and Reliability

	4-H		Community	
	Mean (SD)	Alpha	Mean (SD)	Alpha
Sparks	3.48(1.01)	.83	2.67(.97)	.80
Mindset	4.01(.65)	.74	3.85(.82)	.85
Goals	4.10(.60)	.90	3.64(.74)	.88
Thriving	4.36(.48)	.86	3.93(.62)	.88
Stress	2.36(.71)	.67	2.85(.86)	.71
Depression	1.69(.56)	.65	2.15(.72)	.71
Self-Esteem	.423(.59)	.75	3.80(.86)	.79

