ADOLESCENCE IN BRIEF II

Understanding Adolescents' Needs

A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

1. Adolescents need consistent, supportive adult and peer relationships to thrive and manage challenges and stress and engage in deep learning experiences.

image: phatplus

2. Adolescents are preparing for adulthood. They seek environments that give them a sense of belonging, help them feel safe, respect their culture and backgrounds, and offer opportunities to explore their own identity.

image: Smashicons

3. Adolescents seek learning experiences that allow them to leverage their voice and agency and pursue their passions and interests.

image: Freepik

4. Adolescents are exploring meaning of the world. They seek to understand their own individual strengths and assets, and their role and responsibility in society.

image: Freepik

5. Beyond academics, adolescents need a broader set of services and supports such as healthcare, work based learning, and civic engagement.

image: noomtah

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

Consider this: what can the local community and businesses do to engage students in real-world learning such as internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning? Are there any opportunities to use virtual and online learning to connect students with peers in other schools or settings? Can students participate in virtual clubs and classes not offered at your school?
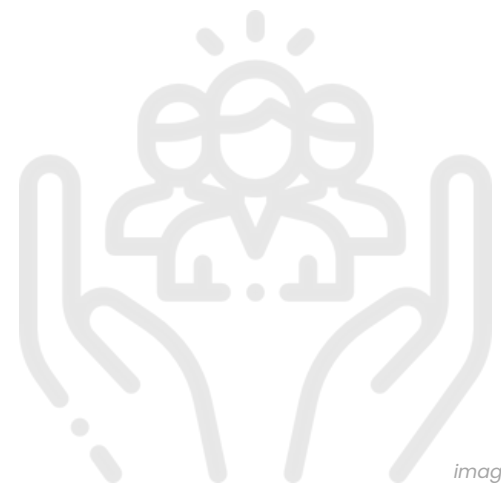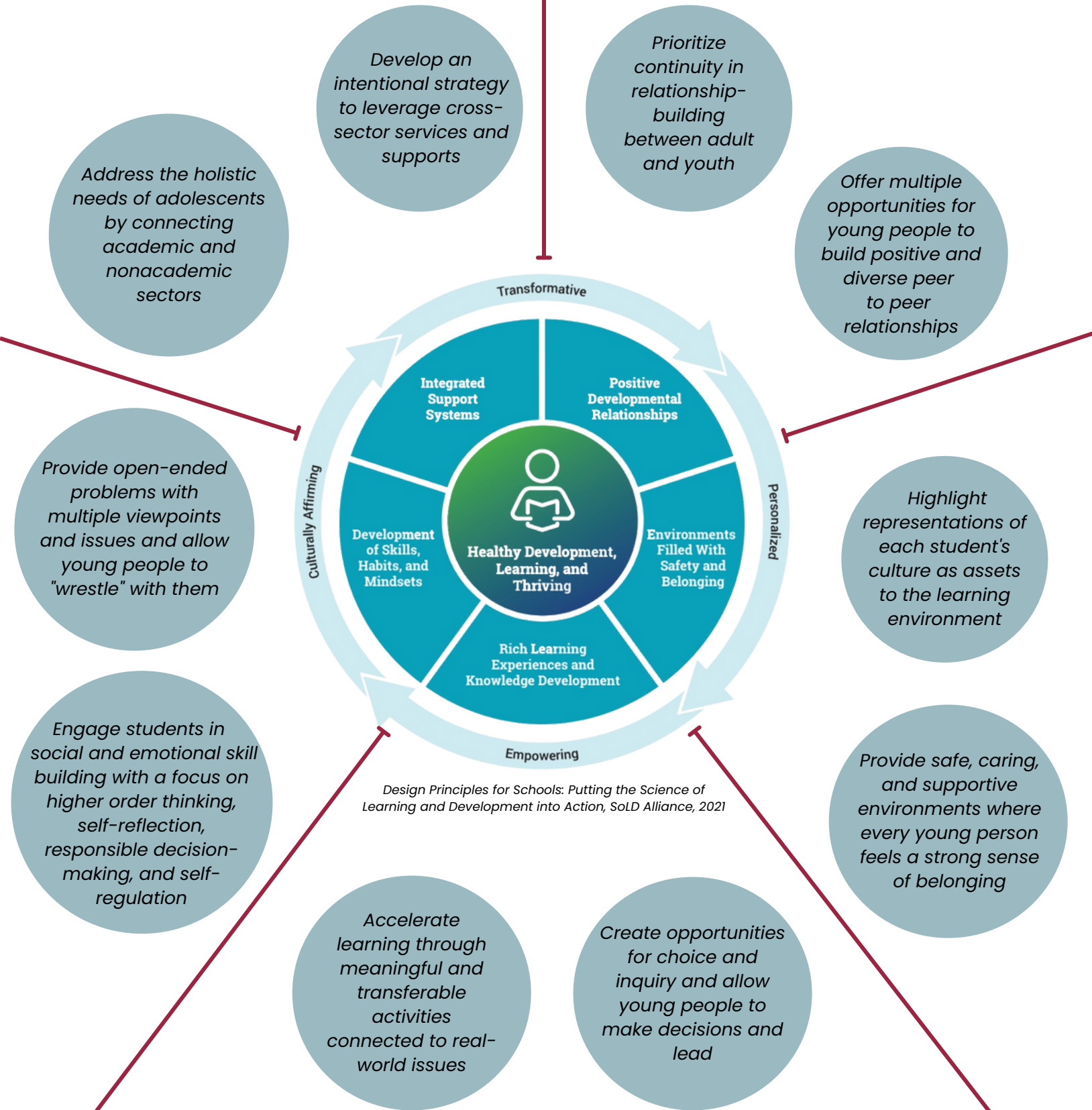
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FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Develop an intentional strategy to leverage cross-sector services and supports

Prioritize continuity in relationship-building between adult and youth

Address the holistic needs of adolescents by connecting academic and nonacademic sectors

Offer multiple opportunities for young people to build positive and diverse peer to peer relationships

Provide open-ended problems with multiple viewpoints and issues and allow young people to "wrestle" with them

Highlight representations of each student's culture as assets to the learning environment

Engage students in social and emotional skill building with a focus on higher order thinking, self-reflection, responsible decision-making, and self-regulation

Provide safe, caring, and supportive environments where every young person feels a strong sense of belonging

Accelerate learning through meaningful and transferable activities connected to real-world issues

Create opportunities for choice and inquiry and allow young people to make decisions and lead

Transformative

Integrated Support Systems

Positive Developmental Relationships

Culturally Affirming

Personalized

Development of Skills, Habits, and Mindsets

Healthy Development, Learning, and Thriving

Environments Filled With Safety and Belonging

Rich Learning Experiences and Knowledge Development

Empowering

Design Principles for Schools: Putting the Science of Learning and Development into Action, SoLD Alliance, 2021

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