

Article

Why Not All Three? Combining the Keller, Rhodes, and Spencer Models Two Decades Later to Equitably Support the Health and Well-Being of Minoritized Youth in Mentoring Programs

Kristian V. Jones ^{1,*} , Grace Gowdy ² and Aisha N. Griffith ³¹ School of Social Work, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98105, USA² Youth, Family & Community, Education Northwest, Portland, OR 97209, USA; grace.gowdy@ednw.org³ Educational Psychology, University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago, IL 60637, USA; griffit3@uic.edu

* Correspondence: kjones21@uw.edu

Abstract: Building on previous work examining the three central theoretical models driving the youth mentoring literature, the present paper presents an updated conceptual framework on how youth mentoring can equitably support health outcomes for young people, particularly minoritized or otherwise marginalized youth. Youth mentoring has been demonstrated to support positive health outcomes (e.g., mental health, well-being) for all young people, and has a growing literature base to match the enthusiasm in findings. The core conceptual models, however, had not been updated for nearly 20 years. This paper starts with the guiding values behind the updated model, including centering the pursuit of social justice, a recognition of structural oppression, and utilizing key modern theoretical bases (healing-centered engagement, a strengths-based approach, and community cultural wealth). Ultimately, this paper presents an updated conceptual model, outlining key aspects needed to support mental health for minoritized young people through youth mentoring, including building a foundational relationship, key mechanisms of mentoring, reciprocal benefits, and context-specific support.



Citation: Jones, K.V.; Gowdy, G.; Griffith, A.N. Why Not All Three? Combining the Keller, Rhodes, and Spencer Models Two Decades Later to Equitably Support the Health and Well-Being of Minoritized Youth in Mentoring Programs. *Youth* **2024**, *4*, 1348–1363. <https://doi.org/10.3390/youth4030085>

Academic Editor: Giulio D'Urso

Received: 11 July 2024

Revised: 26 August 2024

Accepted: 31 August 2024

Published: 5 September 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: mentoring programs; minoritized youth; equity; conceptual model

1. Introduction

Since as early as 1975, there have been over 70 studies testing the impacts of formal youth mentoring programs [1]. Dozens more published studies have considered qualities of mentors and programs, specific youth populations, and how to best support young people through mentoring interventions. This ever-growing field of study has, so far, established that there are small-to-moderate, short-term positive outcomes for young people [1,2]. Positive outcomes for young people are more likely to occur, with greater effect size, when programs are of high quality [2].

More recently, key scholars of the youth mentoring literature have begun to think about the ways in which mentoring programs differ for minoritized (i.e., groups that are systematically oppressed due to their identities [3]) and other marginalized youth (i.e., young people pushed to the margins of society due to demographic characteristics [4]) [5–7]. The growing number of formal, published studies on this important topic coincide with much larger informal conversations among youth mentoring scholars around the need to recognize the role of structural oppression in examinations of access to, and quality of, formal youth mentoring relationships. As members of the National Mentoring Resource Center's Research Board, the three authors of this paper have been privy to conversations in which key scholars informally discuss the role of structural oppression and antiracist perspectives raised in recent studies by Dr. Sanchez, Dr. Hurd and others, and the need for updated theoretical models that consider these important factors. Indeed, Dr. Hurd has recently published an updated theoretical model considering these key factors in informal

youth mentoring, a separate but coinciding field of study [8]. Needed now is a close examination of the currently-utilized theoretical models for formal youth mentoring and efforts to modernize these models to include key factors such as the acknowledgement of structural oppression and valuing of antiracist perspectives, particularly in regard to how formal youth mentoring relationships can facilitate positive health and well-being for minoritized and marginalized young people.

2. Process

In order to put forth an updated theoretical model, the three authors of this paper first needed to consider the currently-utilized theoretical models. We identified three models, all developed in the mid-2000s, and considered foundational to the field. We then had formal conversations with the three main authors of these models, Renee Spencer [9], Tom Keller [10], and Jean Rhodes [11]. These conversations enabled us to explore in detail Spencer's relational framework of mentoring, Keller's systemic model of the mentoring framework, and Rhodes's model of mentoring. Our findings on how these models originated, their contributions to the field, and where to build from there can be found in depth in the corresponding article [12].

The current paper builds on that work by proposing a model that combines the three foundational models, alongside important perspectives on recognizing structural oppression and valuing antiracist ideals and how these concepts impact the health and well-being of young people engaged in mentoring programs. This proposed model first comes with a statement of who we are and our shared values guiding this endeavor. We then present the strengths of each foundational model and how they complement each other. We then present factors that would enhance these models to be more relevant to power dynamics in mentoring. Finally, we conclude by proposing a new conceptual model that reflects advances in the field, alongside the supporting literature for each component.

3. Who We Are and Our Guiding Values

In recognition that no theoretical or conceptual work exists in a vacuum, but that rather it is a direct reflection of the authors behind it, we first start this presentation of a new model with a statement of who we are. All three authors are considered Early Career Scholars, having earned PhDs within ten years of this publication. Two of the three authors identify as Black; two identify as women, one identifies as a man, and one identifies as queer. Two of the three authors consider social work as their home discipline, while one is a youth development scholar. All are well-connected to the larger field of youth mentoring scholars, through both informal and formal connections such as the National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board. As such, the authors benefited from mentoring relationships from more senior scholars in the field, many of whom were consulted as part of this project. In addition to these formal connections to the mentoring literature, all three have served as mentors and have benefited as mentees. We believe in the power of human relationships to promote positive outcomes, both from a knowledge of the literature and lived experience.

In conversations with Drs. Keller, Rhodes, and Spencer, we learned that these three models were created based on philosophical orientations in their respective fields, their personal experiences, and what they saw as missing in the field of mentoring during the mid 2000s (see [12]). Since we valued these stories, we begin by documenting our own values in developing a new model during the mid 2020s. We are guided by three values stemming from various conceptual frameworks that we view as useful to extend these models, while also holding fast to the initial intentions of the models.

4. Centering the Pursuit of Social Justice and Recognition of Structural Oppression

To begin with, all youth grapple with some sort of environmental challenges and different groups of minoritized youth have faced historical injustices in the United States, which results in unique and specific barriers for them to overcome in order to achieve productive

and healthy lives [13–16]. For example, Black Americans have constantly fought for the American dream amidst intense adversity dating back to the enslavement of their African ancestors who were brought to the United States against their will, followed by Jim Crow segregation, the Civil Rights movement, and the Black Lives Matter movement [17–20]. Further, researchers have documented that youth with minoritized sexual orientations and gender identities have specific stressors that need to be considered in youth mentoring relationships in order to best account for their overall health and well-being [21–23].

A substantial body of empirical evidence has consistently confirmed that discrimination and prejudice are common experiences in the day-to-day lives of the racially and ethnically minoritized and are particularly accentuated for youth from oppressed backgrounds [24–27]. Because adolescence is widely accepted as a developmental period when youth begin to reflect about their ethnic/racial identity at a deeper level, it is also expected that youth will become more acutely aware about various manifestations of ethnic/racial discrimination. According to this empirical literature, ethnic/racial discrimination has several negative effects on youths' well-being, particularly on adolescents' self-esteem [26,28,29]. Research also underscores the fact that specific dimensions of ethnic/racial identity (e.g., identity exploration, positive affect, public regard) can be protective factors against the adverse effects of discrimination and systemic racism [30,31]. Youth mentoring research illustrates that mentoring can be used to help youth deal with the discrimination and oppression they may experience in their life due to their ethnic/racial identity, by cultivating positive elements of ethnic/racial identity [32–36]. For example, in Sánchez and colleagues' study [35] examining the role of natural mentors in the lives of Latinx adolescents, the researchers found that ethnic identity among Latinx adolescents mediated the association between the quality of the mentoring relationship and change over time in views of the economic value of pursuing education. The same study found that the quality of the mentoring relationship between Latinx adolescents and their mentors was associated with higher levels of exploration and identity affirmation, underscoring the importance of identity development outlined in Rhodes' seminal youth mentoring framework [11].

The idea that mentors can be advocates for social change with regards to racial oppression has been highlighted in the mentoring literature [37–40]. For example, frameworks such as critical mentoring have been developed by highlighting the critical role that mentors have in facilitating conversations and actions towards promoting the empowerment of minoritized and otherwise marginalized youth of color [40].

4.1. Utilizing Healing-Centered Engagement

When combining the models, we valued using a healing-centered engagement (HCE) lens to conceptualize mentoring in a way that promotes the optimal health and well-being of youth and advances social justice. In "The Future of Healing: Shifting From Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement" [41], Ginwright states:

A healing centered approach to addressing trauma requires a different question that moves beyond "what happened to you" to "what's right with you" and views those exposed to trauma as agents in the creation of their own well-being rather than victims of traumatic events. (p. 3)

This piece describes four key elements, or principles, of HCE that can enhance formal mentoring programs.

Ginwright shares in his writings and public talks that the impetus for the HCE approach was that a young person said to him during a men's group that "I am more than what happened to me, I'm not just my trauma". Given this, one of the principles of HCE is that it "is asset driven and focuses [on the] well-being we want, rather than symptoms we want to suppress" [41] (p. 4). We believe using an HCE lens can help shift the mentoring field from primarily focusing on the trauma or behavior that may have brought some youth to a mentoring program. This can then help mentors recognize that mentees are agents in the development of their well-being and the mentor is a resource for mentees in the

process. We believe continuing to have a trauma-informed approach in the mentoring field is appropriate. However, it cannot be the sole focus, leading some adults who volunteer to be mentors wanting to learn what happened to their mentee so that they, the mentor, can “fix” the mentee. It is essential that those who volunteer to be a mentor learn about the strengths that their mentee possesses that they, the mentor, can be inspired by and nurture. Focusing more on assets is also likely to support mentees’ thriving. Caldwell and Witt [42] describe thriving as key to positive development, stating that

Thriving entails the engagement of one’s unique talents, interests, and/or aspirations. In this lies the assumption of one’s self awareness of [their] uniqueness and the opportunities to purposefully manifest them. Through such engagement, one might be thought of as actively working toward fulfilling [their] full potential. (p. 2).

We believe that when mentors focus on the mentee’s purpose, aspirations, and talents, they can also push beyond solely focusing on traumatic experiences that have happened to mentees, to the unique passions of their mentees. Notably, a second principle of HCE is that it also asserts the importance of supporting “adult providers with their own healing” [41] (p. 4), something that can be integrated in the field of mentoring where training and technical support are already commonplace.

We believe HCE also serves as a call for adapting the foundational models in a way that moves toward centering mentoring as addressing oppression and pushing toward social justice for the overall health and well-being of young people. An important principle of HCE is that it is “explicitly political, rather than clinical”. Ginwright [41] argues that

when people advocate for policies and opportunities that address causes of trauma, such as lack of access to mental health, these activities contribute to a sense of purpose, power and control over life situations. All of these are ingredients necessary to restore well-being and healing. (p. 4)

Because of this, Ginwright argues that adults working with young people must “build critical reflection and take loving action” (p. 6). Ultimately, when mentors develop critical reflection, they can partner with mentees to analyze “practices and policies that facilitated the trauma in the first place”, as well as the structures in society that marginalize young people (p. 6). HCE also calls for mentors to take action alongside their mentees because, as Ginwright argues, “building this sense of power and control among traumatized groups is perhaps one of the most significant features in restoring holistic well-being” (p. 6). We believe that mentors have an opportunity to shift from a savior mentality to one in which they are collaborating to build mentees’ sense of power in an inequitable world.

A fourth and final principle of HCE that we believe is key to the mentoring field is that it focuses on being “culturally grounded and views healing as the restoration of identity” including the “intersectional nature of identity” [41] (p. 4). The focus on promoting positive identity as related to one’s culture is particularly key for mentees of color, who make up much of the mentoring population [43,44]. Ginwright argues that “for youth of color, these forms of healing can be rooted in culture and serves as an anchor to connect young people to a shared racial and ethnic identity” that “incorporates culturally grounded rituals, and activities to restore well-being” [42] (p. 4). Being culturally grounded requires cultivating empathy, cultural humility, and accountability.

4.2. Valuing a Strengths-Based Approach with Young People

As two of the three co-authors of this present paper are social workers by training, a classic value of the social work profession is also seen as a tenet of this work: the strengths-based perspective. The strengths-based perspective acknowledges the value that the young person and their family bring to a mentoring relationship [45]. Thus, we value centering the reciprocal nature of mentoring relationships within an ecological context (see [4]). We recognize that proximal processes are core to the mentoring relationship. Bronfenbrenner describes how these are what fuel development, with properties like engaging over an extended amount of time, stating:

Developmentally effective proximal processes are not unidirectional; there must be influence in both directions. For interpersonal interaction, this means that initiatives do not come from one side only; there must be some degree of reciprocity in the exchange. [46] (p. 798)

The reciprocal nature of mentoring means that there are impacts both on the mentor and mentee. We recognize that these reciprocal interactions occur in a larger ecology that influences the mentee, the mentor, and how the two interact with each other over time. We also value youth voice as central to the youth mentoring relationship, as we believe that young people have the ability and right to make decisions and set goals within their relationship, through a recognition of their values from the strengths-based perspective.

4.3. Recognizing Social Capital and All Forms of Community Cultural Wealth

Another factor that is reflected in the foundation models (Keller's particularly), but not yet developed, is the young person's social capital beyond their parents and/or caregivers. A young person's access to social capital, or the resources they have available to them through their social network, comes primarily from their parents, parents' network, neighbors, peers and teachers [47]. A young person's social world is thus the network of people that they know and the resources within those relationships.

Employing a social capital perspective also allows us to consider the structures within which our social world lies, and how structural oppression may impact young people's social worlds and overall well-being [48]. For example, teachers often serve as network brokers, mentors embedded in powerful institutions that either provide bridging capital or serve as a barrier to resources [49]. Teachers are often noted as influential informal mentors but can also use their power to serve as a barrier to young people, by moving a young person through the educational system with little support, relying on harsh discipline or not engaging with the student [50–53].

This recognition of structural oppression at play in the lives of minoritized and otherwise-marginalized young people shifts us away from deficit-based perspectives that locate explanations for disparate outcomes in individual abilities, to focus on the systems of relationships around them. Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model [54] goes a step further, by exposing the centering of White middle-class culture in many conceptualizations of social capital, which encourages us to view youth who are not in that group as "culturally poor" (p. 76), not acknowledging the array of knowledge, skills, and abilities demonstrated by marginalized groups that are drawn from their homes and communities. The Community Cultural Wealth model [54], rooted in Critical Race Theory, delineates various forms of capital that are nurtured within Black and Brown communities, such as familial, linguistic, and aspirational capital, with the last defined as "the ability to hold onto hope in the face of structured inequality and often without the means to make such dreams a reality" (p. 77). Navigational capital, the ways that minoritized and marginalized young people respond and adapt to different relational contexts and their associated expectations, is another demonstrable asset available predominantly to minoritized and marginalized young people [48]. A guiding value of the presented Equity model is thus a recognition of the larger social world of the young person and a call to recognize a wider array of assets available to them to cultivate their health and overall well-being.

5. How the Strengths of the Previous Models Complement One Another

An updated version that combines the three foundational mentoring models would result in a thorough and robust mentoring framework that provides a comprehensive conceptualization as to how youth mentoring makes an impact on the lives of youth. Specifically, including Keller's systemic model of mentoring framework [10], Rhodes's model of mentoring [55] and Spencer's relational framework of mentoring [9] provides the much-needed conceptualization of how the youth's social network impacts different elements of the youth mentoring relationship and leads to positive health outcomes. This recognition of the social network and social capital of the young person is expanded on in

the proposed model below. The specific focus of Spencer’s relational processes in youth mentoring [9] provides more detail for Keller’s and Rhodes’s respective models in regard to the specific interpersonal elements that occur between mentors and mentees in their relationship. Indeed, Spencer’s identification of the four core relational processes: (a) authenticity, (b) empathy, (c) collaboration, and (d) companionship, provides more insight into how the mentors and mentees build rapport and maintain a lasting and impactful relationship. These key relational processes are retained in the proposed model below. Finally, Rhodes’s model identifies three broad outcome areas: social–emotional development, cognitive development, and identity development, providing three tangible and flexible outcomes to supplement Keller’s and Spencer’s respective models. The inclusion of theorized outcomes is important to any model of youth mentoring and is included in the proposed model below. For a more complete reflection of the three foundational models, their contributions to the formal youth mentoring literature, and the perspective of their authors, please see [12].

6. The Equity Model of Formal Youth Mentoring

Although Keller’s systemic model of mentoring [8], Rhodes’s model of youth mentoring [55], and Spencer’s [6] relational processes in youth mentoring are highly influential models that have stood the test of time, we believe that the field grows when updated theoretical models are put forward. After deep examination of previous theoretical models, conversation with their authors, and reflection on what is missing from these important works, we propose a new Equity Model of Formal Youth Mentoring. Although we believe there are valuable pieces in here that are applicable to many different iterations of mentoring, the Equity model is most relevant to formal mentoring (as in matching young people with mentors they do not already know) for adolescents and young adults. We believe that this model, guided by the above values, promotes equitable support to young people, in that it may be particularly helpful in supporting minoritized or otherwise marginalized young people in living healthy and meaningful lives. The following sections walk through the background literature and give an explanation for the inclusion of each aspect of the Equity model seen in Figure 1.

The Equity Model of Formal Youth Mentoring

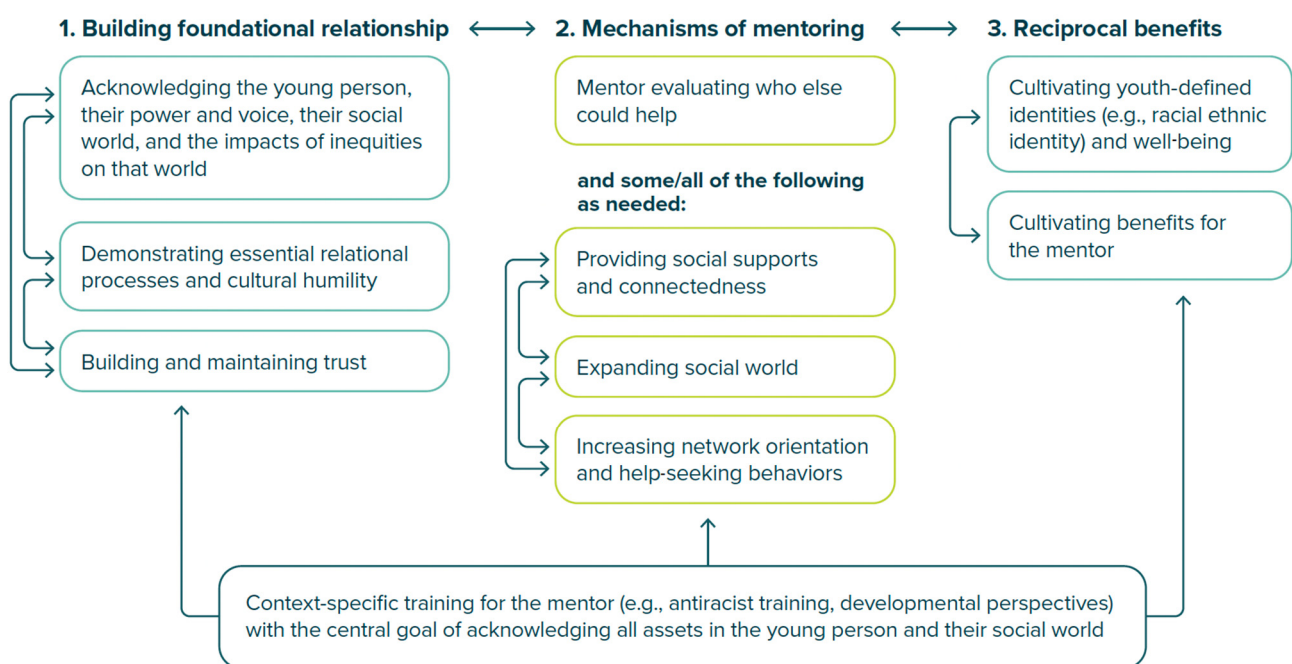


Figure 1. The Equity Model of Formal Youth Mentoring.

6.1. *Building a Foundational Relationship*

The first step in this model, and in any youth mentoring relationship, is building the foundation. Our emphasis on the three proposed essential activities to build a mentoring relationship comes directly from Dr. Spencer, who in our conversation noted that, at the end of the day, it really is about what happens relationally between mentor and mentee [56]. You will note that this section of the model has arrows pointing to and from all three of these essential activities, as we believe they support one another and should happen in tandem with one another.

6.2. *Acknowledging the Young Person, Their Power and Voice, and Their Social World*

The first essential activity to build a healthy and productive mentoring relationship is to acknowledge the young person, their strengths, power and voice, their multitude of identities, and their own social world. The Equity model calls for a recognition of the young person's strengths (e.g., navigational capital, resources within existing relationships) as an extension of the strengths-based value. This first essential activity also centers the young person's power and voice—a direct call from the healing-centered engagement perspective, which strives to engage young people as “agents in the creation of their own well-being” [43] (p. 3). A simple way that a mentor could value a young person's voice and choice is by allowing the young person to pick activities for their outings together. Additionally, a mentoring program could value the voices of the youth in their program by giving them the opportunity to shape program delivery by creating a youth advisory board and compensating young people for their time and expertise. We also include a centering of the young person's multitude of identities, as this directly ties to some of the outcomes of interest (cultivating youth-defined identities).

Lastly, this first essential activity calls for mentors and practitioners alike to recognize the social world of the young person. We know that strong relationships with a network of caring adults provide a necessary context for young people to thrive and that two out of every three young people report having a caring non-parental adult that provides them with support [57,58]. Additionally, recent research illustrates that the caregivers of youth, specifically Black youth, can be a significant source of support for mentors attempting to build rapport and develop a strong bond with their mentee [59,60]. Needed now is a full and integrated recognition of the social world of the young person that the mentor and mentoring agency is joining, with all of its strengths and resources. Indeed, the field of mentoring tends to view the social worlds of minoritized and otherwise marginalized young people as impoverished, despite the increased likelihood of kin or kin-like relationships [54]. These kin and kin-like relationships are associated with a decreased likelihood of reporting depression and anxiety and need to be recognized as the assets that they are [61–64]. An example of what this may look like in action includes completing an ecomap with the young person, wherein they have the opportunity to tell you about their social world and who they turn to. Once that information is captured by the mentor, the mentoring program could seek out these individuals and gauge their interest in collaborating in planning community events and programming.

6.3. *Demonstrating Essential Relational Processes and Cultural Humility*

Dr. Spencer has a depth of knowledge on the key relational processes needed to form a healthy relationship between mentor and mentee. We recommend that readers turn to the Relational Model of Youth Mentoring for an in-depth examination of the role of authenticity, empathy, collaboration, and companionship [9]. The Equity model posits that these essential relational processes should be demonstrated from the mentor to the mentee as part of building the foundation of their relationship, alongside a demonstration of cultural humility. Cultural humility can be conceptualized as a process of critical self-reflection that includes an individual acknowledging their worldview while also recognizing the value of others' perspectives when interacting with people from diverse backgrounds and identities different to their own [65,66]. The concept of cultural humility is critical to include into

the essential relational processes between mentors and mentees, due to the number of young people with minoritized identities and backgrounds engaged in mentoring relationships with mentors who may not share those same identities, worldviews, or experiences. Furthermore, Spencer's model [9] illustrates how a lack of cultural humility can be a barrier in youth mentoring relationships featuring individuals with differences in identities. Therefore, both mentors and mentoring programs should also consider the importance of cultural humility in developing empathy and taking a non-judgmental approach to mentoring minoritized youth.

Demonstrating empathy in an early-phase mentoring relationship could include the mentor taking the mentee's perspective on something and a mentor demonstrating an openness to the wants, needs, and experiences of the mentee [67]. Authenticity, described as being able to express genuine feelings, is also important to demonstrate in this foundational phase, as is collaboration, the ability to work together towards a common goal [9]. Lastly, companionship—simply enjoying each other and time spent together, is of central importance in youth mentoring. When describing this key relational process, Dr. Spencer notes “what kids are looking for is to have fun. In the context of that companionship, there is a lot of growth that can happen” [12]. Ideally, mentors display cultural humility when interacting with young people by reflecting on their own biases and identities throughout the relationship, while also being open to different insights and experiences the young person has in a world they may or may not be able to relate to themselves.

6.4. Building and Maintaining Trust

Another essential activity is building and maintaining trust. Rhodes' model of youth mentoring identifies trust as a critical component of a mentoring relationship because it can facilitate the outcomes of social-emotional development, cognitive development, and identity development. The model argues that a mentee's trust in their mentor facilitates social-emotional development because the mentee now has a space in which they are comfortable opening up, the mentor has a space where they can help the mentee process emotions and manage stress, and the mentee experiences a model of a healthy relationship [55,68]. To a lesser extent, cognitive development is supported by trust because within these conversations the mentor “provides scaffolding onto which an adolescent can acquire and refine thinking skills” [55], [68] (p. 152), [69]. Finally, trust can be a catalyst for identity development, especially for older adolescents who often form trusting relationships around skill and career development [69]. Because of this, a mentor needs to focus on building trust and also maintaining trust over time.

Mentors' focus on building and maintaining trust is particularly important for promoting equity, because minoritized young people have experienced adults not being worthy of trust. Indeed, research illustrates that cultural mistrust can play a role in formal mentoring relationships between girls of color and White mentors [70]. This is why this trust formation must be in tandem with the other two essential components, including mentors developing cultural humility and understanding the impacts of inequities on the mentee's world.

6.5. Mechanisms of Mentoring

In light of a strengths-based acknowledgement of the social world of the young person, the Equity model first invites mentors to consider which of the mechanisms below they are in the best position to provide and what below mechanisms could be provided by someone else. We also invite mentors and practitioners alike to consider what the young person has identified as their goals and identities of importance before considering which of these mechanisms are of central importance. Once these broader reflections have been considered, we believe that the mechanisms of mentoring given below are of most saliency.

6.6. Providing Social Support and Connectedness

The direct provision of social support is still of central importance in youth mentoring. Social support is broadly defined as “a flow of emotional concern, instrumental aid, infor-

mation, and/or appraisal between people" [71]. Informational support (i.e., advice-giving), emotional support (e.g., positive appraisal), and instrumental support (i.e., tangible support, like a ride) are important tenants of a high-quality mentoring relationship and overall well-being for the young person [72]. Within mentoring relationships, those young people who report receiving informational support from their mentor were more likely to own a car or bank account [73]. Those who report feeling emotionally supported have higher rates of academic competence [74] and strong academic outcomes [75].

6.7. Expanding Social World

Mentors can also impact the lives of young people by expanding their social world through the provision of bridging capital, connecting the young person to new resources and information to which they did not have access before [76]. Studies have shown that bridging mentors (commonly teachers and school personnel) were likely to promote educational attainment and employment [50,77–79]. Bridging capital can also expand the young person's network by providing access to a new pool of adults. As a young person, having a mentor from outside your network grants you access to their network [37].

6.8. Increasing Network Orientation and Help-Seeking Behaviors

Having a positive relationship with a caring non-parental adult may fuel a young person's confidence to seek out support from other adults, thus increasing a network-oriented mindset [39]. This becomes an extension of bridging capital, in that the mentor may not even need to introduce the young person to the new adult; a successful mentoring relationship may also help the youth garner the self-confidence and social skills needed to expand their network on their own [37]. Measuring benefits from mentoring such as increased network orientation and help-seeking behavior helps practitioners and researchers alike start to capture the "multiplier effect" of positive relationships with adults. The "multiplier effect", from social-capital literature, is where access to opportunity begets access to opportunity [80].

7. Reciprocal Benefits

7.1. Cultivating Youth-Defined Identities and Well-Being

In light of our values of both the strengths-based approach and Healing-Centered Engagement, the Equity model of youth mentoring calls for two priority outcomes for young people: the cultivation of youth-defined identities and well-being.

The inclusion of identity formation in the Equity model is a direct nod to the Model of Youth Mentoring and the body of work establishing identity formation as a central outcome of mentoring and overall youth development [55,81–87]. We have purposefully chosen to leave the specific identities to be cultivated open to the young person, as a means of centering their own individual voice in the mentoring process.

As the youth in the world become more and more diverse in a variety of different ways (e.g., ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability status, gender identity, and many others) the identities youth may identify as are constantly expanding and changing, as they navigate through the world and ask themselves the simple question "Who am I?" As indicated in Rhodes' foundational youth mentoring model, identity development is a critical aspect to consider in youth mentoring relationships [55]. This proposed Equity model of youth mentoring encourages both mentors and mentoring programs to consider the ways in which mentoring relationships can cultivate identities youth define as important for themselves. Identity development in general is an important aspect of human development, but specific identities can play a pivotal role in the lives of young people in helping them navigate the world and answer the question of who they are in the world.

Although it is important to leave particular identities of interest up to the young person to decide for themselves, we do want to briefly touch on the role formal youth mentoring plays in developing different types of identities important for human development, specifically ethnic/racial identity development. The importance of considering

ethnic/racial identity development in a youth mentoring framework cannot be understated, particularly because it is a critical factor that promotes positive youth development and enhances protective factors against the deleterious effects of racial and ethnic discrimination and systemic racism among minoritized youth [30,31]. For our model we use an integrated presentation of ethnic/racial identity, due to the relevance of both constructs [88]. Ethnic/racial identity is defined as “a multidimensional, psychological construct that reflects the beliefs and attitudes that individuals have about their ethnic/racial group membership, as well as the processes by which these beliefs and attitudes develop over time” [86]. How youth mentoring can be utilized to cultivate all or specific dimensions of ethnic/racial identity—as an example of identity development broadly—is explicitly considered, due to the importance of this construct and the potential of mentoring to have a positive influence on ethnic/racial identity. It is also important to note that intersectional identities shape the experiences of navigating society, such that one cannot disconnect overlapping identities or intersections of oppression. For instance, mentors working with Black girls must recognize navigating school as a Black girl is uniquely challenging because such mentees experience gendered racism in which they are punished for subjective judgments of “disrespect” based on White notions of femininity, hypersexualized, seen as needing less nurturing, and treated differently, based on multiple markers of their identity (e.g., [89–92]). As such, mentors cognizant of this will explicitly recognize how a positive identity as a girl of color requires a degree of critical consciousness to resist these circumstances and be resilient in the face of them [93].

The second priority outcome for young people in the Equity model of youth mentoring is well-being. The well-being of young people has been defined and conceptualized in a variety of different ways over the years. For the sake of this framework focused on youth mentoring, we conceptualize youth well-being as a multidimensional construct comprising several important domains that are critical to healthy youth development and impactful mentoring relationships with young people [94]. The first domain, outlined by Ross and colleagues [94], is good health and optimum nutrition, which includes both the physical and mental health of the young person. The second domain is connectedness, positive values, and contribution to society, which encompasses having the opportunities for youth to be connected to positive social networks. The third domain is safety and a supportive environment, which includes both physical and emotional security. The fourth domain is learning, competence, education, skills, and employability, which covers all aspects of discovery and scholarship. And the fifth and final domain of well-being is agency and resilience, which involves empowerment of youth and providing resources to deal with adversity. In the case of minoritized youth, the empowerment of youth and resources to deal with adversity involves the development of skills like critical consciousness. Critical consciousness can include critical awareness, critical reflection, and critical action that is facilitated by the nature of a mentoring relationship [95–97].

The consideration of youth-defined identities and skills to navigate society to promote positive well-being (e.g., cultivation of critical consciousness) speaks to the importance of critical positive youth development (CPYD) for minoritized and other marginalized young people receiving mentoring [98]. CPYD builds upon the foundation of positive youth development by explicitly including constructs like critical reflection and political efficacy along with the foundational components of traditional positive youth development. Both mentors and mentoring programs are in an important position in their mentee’s life, acting as a contributor, facilitator, and supporter with respect to the young person’s ability to critically analyze systems they are navigating and impact those systems either from inside or outside of them (e.g., finding ways to improve their local school system).

7.2. Mentor Benefits

Although youth mentoring is traditionally focused on benefits of the relationship for the youth, recent research illustrates that mentors can benefit from the youth mentoring experience as well [5,99,100], a potential outcome that is not explicitly fleshed out in any of

the staple models of youth mentoring. An explicit recognition of the benefits to mentors comes from a strengths-based perspective—that young people have skills, experience and resources adults can benefit from, and have a lot to give to the relationship. In particular, researchers have identified how mentors can gain awareness of the dynamics of social injustice as a result of mentoring marginalized youth, with benefits extending to mentees, such as increased trust by youth resulting from perceived authenticity through their mentors increasingly understanding their mentees' life challenges [5,6,37,69]. Further, a quasi-experimental study of a cultural humility and social justice training for volunteer mentors serving Black youth indicated that non-Black mentors had greater increases from pre- to post-training in cultural sensitivity, sociopolitical awareness (i.e., bias awareness and understanding of the role of sociopolitical context in mentees' lives) and self-efficacy, to support their Black mentees, compared to Black mentors [86]. This, therefore, suggests there may be unique benefits for mentors who engage in cross-ethnic/racial relationships with youth. Moreover, previous research highlights the fact that mentors can develop tangible skills as a result of being a youth mentor, especially if such experiences are associated with underserved populations [4,101,102]. This is important to acknowledge, because the ways in which youth receiving mentoring can add value to the lives of their mentors is a concept not explicitly identified in the youth mentoring frameworks [37,40].

7.3. Context-Specific Support

The Equity model of youth mentoring also calls for context-specific support for the mentor across all phases of relationship development, from building a foundational relationship to noting reciprocal benefits. A large motivation of the Equity model is an acknowledgment that these mentoring relationships do not exist in a vacuum, but rather in a geographical, political place, which drives the access to, and quality of, relationships for young people.

Another acknowledgement seen in this section of the model is the example of antiracist training for mentors [103]. Dr. Sánchez and her team have deep knowledge on this subject, having centered it in their own research in light of the sheer number of cross-race matches that exist in many formal mentoring programs (see [43,44]). Indeed, the majority of formal youth mentoring programs contain a White middle-class mentor and a young person of color [44,103]. Given the sheer prevalence of this particular context in youth mentoring, the Equity model calls for specific training on antiracism. Lastly, developmental training may be helpful for formal youth mentoring matches that have the specific context of seeing a large age gap between mentor and mentee or have mentees of any age that do not have background knowledge on young people. Trainings on what developmental milestones are expected, normal, and healthy, may help provide support or reassurance for mentors who struggle with things like inconsistent communication with the young person, the young person not acting on advice given, or the young person "acting out", as these are all developmentally normative [104,105]. For instance, a mentor working with an early adolescent should understand that the developmental period of early adolescence comes with a growing importance placed on peers and belonging, physical development that impacts coordination, growing curiosity, greater understanding of social inequities, and a huge variability in the onset of changes, which leads one to compare oneself to others [106]. Although an understanding of developmental characteristics is key, mentors must also recognize that the experience of early adolescent development is variable and largely shaped by social structures that marginalize minoritized mentees [107,108]. This means that the model's link to antiracist training in tandem with developmental training is key.

Importantly, a key value driving the need for context-specific support throughout the mentoring relationship is a recognition of the wealth of capital that the young person and their family have. As outlined in Keller's model [8] and other youth mentoring research [6,109], the mentoring-program support staff play a pivotal role in providing ongoing support and supervision through regular monitoring and training, which ensures mentors can meet the specific needs of minoritized youth. In fact, Spencer and

colleagues [110] found that even if youth had a strong relationship with their mentor, lack of support from the program could lead to disruptions in the relationship. With support from the mentoring agency on all contextually specific factors of the mentoring relationship, we believe that mentors can come to recognize the great strengths of the young person and their family. These may include, but are certainly not limited to, navigational capital (e.g., the skills it takes to navigate complex bureaucratic systems) or aspirational capital (e.g., the trust that families have in their White mentors, despite long histories of White supremacy such as those reflected in gentrification, gerrymandering, and the busing crisis).

8. Conclusions

Overall, this article hopes to contribute an updated model of youth mentoring focused on equity and social justice for minoritized youth, to complement three foundational youth mentoring models created by Drs. Keller, Spencer, and Rhodes. Specifically, this article aims to center the factors that minoritized and marginalized youth are up against and display the tangible ways mentoring programs can be a partner with young people to live healthy and meaningful lives. The model is meant to be a guide to mentors, mentoring programs, families, communities, and even young people themselves who are interested in being an active participant in the mentoring process in a mentoring agency. It is the authors' hope that this model is not looked at as a perfect construct, but instead something that can continuously be built upon and refined for years to come.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, K.V.J., A.N.G. and G.G.; writing—original draft preparation, K.V.J., A.N.G. and G.G.; writing—review and editing, K.V.J., A.N.G. and G.G.; visualization, G.G., K.V.J. and A.N.G.; project administration, K.V.J. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Acknowledgments: We are grateful for the contributions of Renee Spencer, Tom Keller, and Jean Rhodes. Without these scholars giving their time and wisdom, this project would not be possible.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Raposa, E.B.; Rhodes, J.; Stams GJ, J.M.; Card, N.; Burton, S.; Schwartz, S.; Sykes LA, Y.; Kanchewa, S.; Kupersmidt, J.; Hussain, S. The effects of youth mentoring programs: A meta-analysis of outcome studies. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2019**, *48*, 423–443. [CrossRef]
2. DuBois, D.L.; Holloway, B.E.; Valentine, J.C.; Cooper, H. Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *Am. J. Community Psychol.* **2002**, *30*, 157–197. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Race and National Origin. National Institutes of Health. Available online: <https://www.nih.gov/nih-style-guide/race-national-origin#:~:text=Minoritized%20populations%20are%20groups%20that,persecuted%20because%20of%20systemic%20oppression> (accessed on 25 August 2024).
4. Russell, S.T.; Campen, K.V. Diversity and inclusion in youth development: What we can learn from marginalized young people. *J. Youth Dev.* **2011**, *6*, 94–106. [CrossRef]
5. Jones, K.; Parra-Cardona, R.; Sánchez, B.; Vohra-Gupta, S.; Franklin, C. All things considered: Examining mentoring relationships between White mentors and Black youth in community-based youth mentoring programs. *Child Youth Care Forum* **2023**, *52*, 997–1017. [CrossRef]
6. Jones, K.; Parra-Cardona, R.; Sánchez, B.; Vohra-Gupta, S.; Franklin, C. Motivations, program support, and personal growth: Mentors perspectives on the reciprocal benefits of cross-racial mentoring relationships with Black youth. *Child. Youth Serv. Rev.* **2023**, *150*, 106996. [CrossRef]
7. Liao, C.L.; Sánchez, B. Mentoring relationship quality profiles and their association with urban, low-income youth's academic outcomes. *Youth Soc.* **2019**, *51*, 443–462. [CrossRef]
8. Hurd, N. Promoting positive development among racially and ethnically marginalized youth: Advancing a novel model of natural mentoring. *Annu. Rev. Clin. Psychol.* **2024**, *20*, 259–284. [CrossRef]

9. Spencer, R. Understanding the Mentoring Process between Adolescents and Adults. *Youth Soc.* **2006**, *37*, 287–315. [[CrossRef](#)]
10. Keller, T.E. A systemic model of the youth mentoring intervention. *J. Prim. Prev.* **2005**, *26*, 169–188. [[CrossRef](#)]
11. Rhodes, J.; DuBois, D. Mentoring Relationships and Programs for Youth. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* **2008**, *17*, 254–258. [[CrossRef](#)]
12. Gowdy, G.; Jones, K.; Griffith, A.N. Youth mentoring as a means of supporting mental health for minoritized youth: A reflection on three theoretical frameworks 20 years later. *Youth* **2024**, *4*, 1211–1223. [[CrossRef](#)]
13. Alexander, M. *The New Jim Crow*; The New Press: New York, NY, USA, 2011.
14. Delgado, R.; Stefancic, J. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*; NYU Press: New York, NY, USA, 2017.
15. Jones, J.M. *Prejudice and Racism*, 2nd ed.; McGraw-Hill: New York, NY, USA, 1997.
16. Young, I.M. Five faces of oppression. In *The Community Development Reader*; DeFilippis, J., Saegert, S., Eds.; Princeton University: Princeton, NJ, USA, 2014; pp. 346–355.
17. Gaylord-Harden, N.; Barbarin, O.; Tolan, P.; Murry, V.; Gaylord-Harden, N. Understanding development of African American boys and young men: Moving from risks to positive youth development. *Am. Psychol.* **2018**, *73*, 753–767. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
18. Jones-Eversley, S.; Adedoyin, A.C.; Robinson, M.A.; Moore, S.E. Protesting Black inequality: A commentary on the Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter. *J. Community Pract.* **2017**, *25*, 309–324. [[CrossRef](#)]
19. Stevenson, H.C. Dueling narratives: Racial socialization and literacy as triggers for re-humanizing African American boys, young men, and their families. In *Boys and Men in African American Families, National Symposium on Family Issues 7*; Burton, L., Burton, D., McHale, S.M., King, V., Van Hook, J., Eds.; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2016; pp. 55–84. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Travis, R.; Leech, T. Empowerment-based positive youth development: A new understanding of healthy development for African American youth. *J. Res. Adolesc.* **2014**, *24*, 93–116. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Edwards, K.M.; Scheer, J.R.; Mauer, V.A. Informal and formal mentoring of sexual and gender minority youth: A systematic review. *Sch. Soc. Work. J.* **2022**, *47*, 37–71.
22. Johnson, D.; Gastic, B. Natural mentoring in the lives of sexual minority youth. *J. Community Psychol.* **2015**, *43*, 395–407. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Kaufman, M.R.; Lin, C.; Levine, D.; Salcido, M.; Casella, A.; Simon, J.; DuBois, D.L. The formation and benefits of natural mentoring for African American sexual and gender minority adolescents: A qualitative study. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **2024**, *39*, 53–76. [[CrossRef](#)]
24. Cunningham, M.; Mulser, R.M.; Scott, K.; Yates, A. African American adolescents speak: The meaning of racial identity in the relation between individual race-related stress and depressive symptoms. In *Handbook of Children and Prejudice*; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2019; pp. 533–550.
25. Huynh, V.; Fuligni, A. Discrimination hurts: The academic, psychological, and physical well-being of adolescents. *J. Res. Adolesc.* **2010**, *20*, 916–941. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Priest, N.; Paradies, Y.; Trenerry, B.; Truong, M.; Karlsen, S.; Kelly, Y. A systematic review of studies examining the relationship between reported racism and health and wellbeing for children and young people. *Soc. Sci. Med.* **2013**, *95*, 115–127. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Seaton, E.K.; Douglass, S. School diversity and racial discrimination among African-American adolescents. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minor. Psychol.* **2014**, *20*, 156–165. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Lo, C.C.; Hopson, L.M.; Simpson, G.M.; Cheng, T.C. Racial/ethnic differences in emotional health: A longitudinal study of immigrants' adolescent children. *Community Ment. Health J.* **2017**, *53*, 92–101. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
29. Pascoe, E.; Richman, L. Perceived discrimination and health: A meta-analytic review. *Psychol. Bull.* **2009**, *135*, 531–554. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
30. Neblett, E.W., Jr.; Rivas-Drake, D.; Umaña-Taylor, A.J. The promise of racial and ethnic protective factors in promoting ethnic minority youth development. *Child Dev. Perspect.* **2012**, *6*, 295–303. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Rivas-Drake, D.; Seaton, E.; Markstrom, C.; Quintana, S.; Syed, M.; Lee, R.; Schwartz, S.; Umaña-Taylor, A.; French, S.; Yip, T. Ethnic and racial identity in adolescence: Implications for psychosocial, academic, and health outcomes. *Child Dev.* **2014**, *85*, 40–57. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Gordon, D.M.; Iwamoto, D.; Ward, N.; Potts, R.; Boyd, E. Mentoring urban Black middle-school male students: Implications for academic achievement. *J. Negro Educ.* **2009**, *78*, 277–289.
33. Hurd, N.M.; Sánchez, B.; Zimmerman, M.A.; Caldwell, C.H. Natural mentors, racial identity, and educational attainment among African American adolescents: Exploring pathways to success. *Child Dev.* **2012**, *83*, 1196–1212. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
34. Kaplan, C.P.; Turner, S.G.; Piotrkowski, C.; Silber, E. Club Amigas: A promising response to the needs of adolescent Latinas. *Child Fam. Soc. Work.* **2009**, *14*, 213–221. [[CrossRef](#)]
35. Sánchez, B.; Anderson, A.J.; Carter, J.S.; Mroczkowski, A.L.; Monjaras-Gaytan, L.Y.; DuBois, D.L. Helping me helps us: The role of natural mentors in the ethnic identity and academic outcomes of Latinx adolescents. *Dev. Psychol.* **2020**, *56*, 208–220. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Sánchez, B.; Hurd, N.M.; Neblett, E.W.; Vaclavik, D. Mentoring for Black male youth: A systematic review of the research. *Adolesc. Res. Rev.* **2018**, *3*, 259–278. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Albright, J.; Hurd, N.; Hussain, S. Applying a social justice lens to youth mentoring: A Review of the literature and recommendations for practice. *Am. J. Community Psychol.* **2017**, *59*, 363–381. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Liang, B.; Bogat, G.; Duffy, N. Gender in mentoring relationships. In *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*; DuBois, D.L., Karcher, M.J., Eds.; SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2014; pp. 159–174. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Schwartz, S.E.O.; Rhodes, J.E. From treatment to empowerment: New approaches to youth mentoring. *Am. J. Community Psychol.* **2016**, *58*, 150–157. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]

40. Weiston-Serdan, T. *Critical Mentoring: A Practical Guide*; Stylus Publishing, LLC.: Sterling, VA, USA, 2017.
41. Ginwright, S. The future of healing: Shifting from trauma-informed care to healing centered engagement. *Occas. Pap.* **2018**, *25*, 25–32. Available online: <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/OP-Ginwright-S-2018-Future-of-healing-care.pdf> (accessed on 12 June 2024).
42. Caldwell, L.L.; Witt, P.A. Ten principles of youth development. In *Youth Development: Principles and Practices in Out-of-School Time Settings*; Witt, P.A., Caldwell, L.L., Eds.; 1807 North Federal Drive, 61801; Sagamore-Venture: Champaign, IL, USA, 2018; pp. 1–25.
43. Garringer, M.; Benning, C. *Who Mentored You? A Study Examining the Role Mentors Have Played in the Lives of Americans Over the Last Half Century*; MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership: Boston, MA, USA, 2023.
44. Garringer, M.; McQuillin, S.; McDaniel, H. *Examining Youth Mentoring Services Across America: Findings from the 2016 National Mentoring Program Survey*; MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership: Boston, MA, USA, 2017. Available online: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED605698.pdf> (accessed on 25 August 2024).
45. Saleebey, D. *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice: Power in the People*; Longman: London, UK, 1992.
46. Bronfenbrenner, U.; Morris, P.A. The bioecological model of human development. In *Handbook of Child Psychology*, 6th ed.; Lerner, R., Damon, W., Eds.; Theoretical models of human development; John Wiley & Sons Inc.: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2006; Volume 1, pp. 793–828.
47. White, M.; Glick, J. Generation Status, Social Capital, and the Routes out of High School. *Sociol. Forum* **2000**, *15*, 671–691. [[CrossRef](#)]
48. Phelan, P.; Davidson, A.L.; Yu, H.C. Students' multiple worlds: Navigating the borders of family, peer, and school cultures. In *Cultural Diversity: Implications for Education*; Phelan, P., Davidson, A.L., Eds.; Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA, 1991; pp. 52–88.
49. Stanton-Salazar, R.D. A social capital framework for the study of institutional agents and their role in the empowerment of low-status students and youth. *Youth Soc.* **2011**, *43*, 1066–1109. [[CrossRef](#)]
50. Erickson, L.D.; McDonald, S.; Elder, G.H. Informal mentors and education: Complementary or compensatory resources? *Sociol. Educ.* **2009**, *82*, 344–367. [[CrossRef](#)]
51. Ewart, I. White teachers as a risk factor in the healthy development of black youth. *Moja Interdiscip. J. Afr. Stud.* **2020**, *1*, 41–50.
52. Riddle, T.; Sinclair, S. Racial disparities in school-based disciplinary actions are associated with county-level rates of racial bias. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* **2019**, *116*, 8255–8260. [[CrossRef](#)]
53. Steketee, A.; Williams, M.T.; Valencia, B.T.; Printz, D.; Hooper, L.M. Racial and language microaggressions in the school ecology. *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* **2021**, *16*, 1075–1098. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
54. Yosso, T.J. Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethn. Educ.* **2005**, *8*, 69–91. [[CrossRef](#)]
55. Rhodes, J. A model of youth mentoring. In *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*; DuBois, D.L., Karcher, M.J., Eds.; SAGE: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2005; pp. 30–43. [[CrossRef](#)]
56. Spencer, R.; Boston University, Boston, MA, USA. Personal communication, 17 March 2023.
57. Bruce, M.; Bridgeland, J. *The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring*; Civic Enterprises with Hart Research Associates for MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership: Boston, MA, USA, 2014. Available online: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Mentoring-Effect-Young-People's-Perspectives-A-Bruce-Bridgeland/42544a3fc5390a18d33d7f8f688f2697f8cd344c> (accessed on 25 August 2024).
58. Meltzer, A.; Muir, K.; Craig, L. The role of trusted adults in young people's social and economic lives. *Youth Soc.* **2016**, *50*, 575–592. [[CrossRef](#)]
59. Jones, K.; Parra-Cardona, R.; Sánchez, B.; Vohra-Gupta, S.; Franklin, C. Forming an alliance: Mentor's perspectives on the role of family and social networks in cross-racial mentoring relationships with Black youth. *J. Ethn. Cult. Divers. Soc. Work.* **2023**, 1–12. [[CrossRef](#)]
60. Mitchell Dove, L. Black Youths' Perspectives: Importance of Family and Caregiver Involvement in the Mentor-Mentee Relationship. *Healthcare* **2022**, *10*, 2181. [[CrossRef](#)]
61. Gowdy, G.; Gillis, T. Impacts of core and capital informal mentoring on minoritized youth: Use of a quasi-experimental design. Poster Presentation Given at the Society for Social Work and Research, Anaheim, CA, USA, 2023.
62. Loury, L. All in the extended family: Effects of grandparents, aunts, and uncles on educational attainment. *Am. Econ. Rev.* **2006**, *96*, 275–278. [[CrossRef](#)]
63. Scott, E.D., Jr.; Deutsch, N.L. Conferring kinship: Examining fictive kinship status in a Black adolescent's natural mentoring relationship. *J. Black Psychol.* **2021**, *47*, 317–353. [[CrossRef](#)]
64. Young, A.A. The redeemed old head: Articulating a sense of public self and social purpose. *Symb. Interact.* **2007**, *30*, 347–374. [[CrossRef](#)]
65. Fisher-Borne, M.; Cain, J.M.; Martin, S.L. From mastery to accountability: Cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competence. *Soc. Work. Educ.* **2015**, *34*, 165–181. [[CrossRef](#)]
66. Foronda, C. A theory of cultural humility. *J. Transcult. Nurs.* **2020**, *31*, 7–12. [[CrossRef](#)]
67. Spencer, R.; Pryce, J.; Barry, J.; Walsh, J.; Basualdo-Delmonico, A. Deconstructing empathy: A qualitative examination of mentor perspective-taking and adaptability in youth mentoring relationships. *Child. Youth Serv. Rev.* **2020**, *114*, 105043. [[CrossRef](#)]

68. Rhodes, J. The critical ingredient: Caring youth-staff relationships in after-school settings. *New Dir. Youth Dev.* **2004**, *2004*, 145–161. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
69. Rhodes, J. *Stand by Me: The Risks and Rewards of Mentoring Today's Youth*; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 2002. [CrossRef]
70. Sánchez, B.; Pryce, J.; Silverthorn, N.; Deane, K.L.; DuBois, D.L. Do mentor support for ethnic-racial identity and mentee cultural mistrust matter for girls of color? A preliminary investigation. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minor. Psychol.* **2019**, *25*, 505–514. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
71. House, J.S. *Work Stress and Social Support*; Addison-Wesley: Boston, MA, USA, 1981.
72. Gottlieb, B.H.; Bergen, A.E. Social support concepts and measures. *J. Psychosom. Res.* **2010**, *69*, 511–520. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
73. Greeson JK, P.; Usher, L.; Grinstein-Weiss, M. One adult who is crazy about you: Can natural mentoring relationships increase assets among young adults with and without foster care experience? *Child. Youth Serv. Rev.* **2010**, *32*, 565–577. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
74. Sterrett, E.M.; Jones, D.J.; McKee, L.G.; Kincaid, C. Supportive non-parental adults and adolescent psychosocial functioning: Using social support as a theoretical framework. *Am. J. Community Psychol.* **2011**, *48*, 284–295. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
75. Wentzel, K.R.; Russell, S.; Baker, S. Emotional support and expectations from parents, teachers, and peers predict adolescent competence at school. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **2016**, *108*, 242–255. [CrossRef]
76. Sullivan, P.J.; Larson, R.W. Connecting youth to high-resource adults: Lessons from effective youth programs. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **2010**, *25*, 99–123. [CrossRef]
77. Hagler, M.; Rhodes, J. The long-term impact of natural mentoring relationships: A counter-factual analysis. *Am. J. Community Psychol.* **2018**, *62*, 175–188. [CrossRef]
78. Chu, P.; Saucier, D.; Hafner, E. Meta-Analysis of the relationships between social support and well-being in children and adolescents. *J. Soc. Clin. Psychol.* **2010**, *29*, 624–645. [CrossRef]
79. Brewster, A.; Bowen, G. Teacher support and the school engagement of Latino middle and high school students at risk of school failure. *Child Adolesc. Soc. Work. J.* **2004**, *21*, 47–67. [CrossRef]
80. Crul, M.; Schneider, J.; Keskiner, E.; Lelie, F. The multiplier effect: How the accumulation of cultural and social capital explains steep upward social mobility of children of low-educated immigrants. *Ethn. Racial Stud.* **2017**, *40*, 321–333. [CrossRef]
81. Chavous, T.; Rivas-Drake, D.; Smalls, C.; Griffin, T.; Cogburn, C. Gender matters, too: The influences of school racial discrimination and racial identity on academic engagement outcomes among African American adolescents. *Dev. Psychol.* **2008**, *44*, 637–654. [CrossRef]
82. Cross, W.; Seaton, E.; Yip, T.; Lee, R.; Rivas, D.; Gee, G.; Roth, W.; Ngo, B. Identity work: Enactment of racial-ethnic identity in everyday life. *Identity* **2017**, *17*, 1–12. [CrossRef]
83. Leath, S.; Mathews, C.; Harrison, A.; Chavous, T. Racial identity, racial discrimination, and classroom engagement outcomes among Black girls and boys in predominantly Black and predominantly White school districts. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2019**, *56*, 1318–1352. [CrossRef]
84. Oyserman, D. Identity-based motivation: Implications for action-readiness, procedural-readiness, and consumer behavior. *J. Consum. Psychol.* **2009**, *19*, 250–260. [CrossRef]
85. Peifer, J.; Lawrence, E.; Williams, J.; Leyton-Armakan, J. The culture of mentoring: Ethnocultural empathy and ethnic identity in mentoring for minority girls. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minor. Psychol.* **2016**, *22*, 440–446. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
86. Umaña-Taylor, A.; Quintana, S.; Lee, R.; Cross, W.; Rivas-Drake, D.; Schwartz, S.; Syed, M.; Yip, T.; Seaton, E. Ethnic and racial identity during adolescence and into young adulthood: An integrated conceptualization. *Child Dev.* **2014**, *85*, 21–39. [CrossRef]
87. Velez, G.; Spencer, M.B. Phenomenology and intersectionality: Using PVEST as a frame for adolescent identity formation amid intersecting ecological systems of inequality. *New Dir. Child Adolesc. Dev.* **2018**, *2018*, 75–90. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
88. Mirpuri, S.; Ray, C.; Hassan, A.; Aladin, M.; Wang, Y.; Yip, T. Ethnic/Racial identity as a moderator of the relationship between discrimination and adolescent outcomes. In *Handbook of Children and Prejudice: Integrating Research, Practice, and Policy*; Fitzgerald, H., Johnson, D., Qin, D., Villarruel, F., Norder, J., Eds.; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2019; pp. 477–499. [CrossRef]
89. Apugo, D.; Castro, A.J.; Dougherty, S.A. Taught in the matrix: A review of Black girls' experiences in U.S. schools. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2023**, *93*, 559–593. [CrossRef]
90. Epstein, R.; Blake, J.; González, T. *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood*; Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality. 2017. Available online: <https://genderjusticeandopportunity.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/girlhood-interrupted.pdf> (accessed on 25 August 2024).
91. Griffith, A.N. "They do us wrong": Bringing together Black adolescent girls' voices on school staff's differential treatment. *J. Black Psychol.* **2023**, *49*, 598–645. [CrossRef]
92. Neal-Jackson, A. A meta-ethnographic review of the experiences of African American girls and young women in K–12 education. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2018**, *88*, 508–546. [CrossRef]
93. Clonan-Roy, K.; Jacobs, C.E.; Nakkula, M.J. Towards a model of positive youth development specific to girls of color: Perspectives on development, resilience, and empowerment. *Gen. Issues* **2016**, *33*, 96–121. [CrossRef]
94. Ross, D.A.; Hinton, R.; Melles-Brewer, M.; Engel, D.; Zeck, W.; Fagan, L.; Herat, J.; Phaladi, G.; Imbago-Jácome, D.; Anyona, P.; et al. Adolescent well-being: A definition and conceptual framework. *J. Adolesc. Health* **2020**, *67*, 472–476. [CrossRef]

95. Christens, B.D.; Winn, L.T.; Duke, A.M. Empowerment and critical consciousness: A conceptual cross-fertilization. *Adolesc. Res. Rev.* **2016**, *1*, 15–27. [[CrossRef](#)]
96. Jemal, A. Critical consciousness: A critique and critical analysis of the literature. *Urban Rev.* **2017**, *49*, 602–626. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
97. Heberle, A.E.; Rapa, L.J.; Farago, F. Critical consciousness in children and adolescents: A systematic review, critical assessment, and recommendations for future research. *Psychol. Bull.* **2020**, *146*, 525–551. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
98. Gonzalez, M.; Kokozos, M.; Byrd, C.M.; McKee, K.E. Critical positive youth development: A framework for centering critical consciousness. *J. Youth Dev.* **2020**, *15*, 24–43. [[CrossRef](#)]
99. Anderson, A.J.; Sánchez, B.; Meyer, G.; Sales, B.P. Supporting adults to support youth: An evaluation of two social justice trainings. *J. Community Psychol.* **2018**, *46*, 1092–1106. [[CrossRef](#)]
100. Duron, J.; Williams-Butler, A.; Schmidt, A.; Colon, L. Mentors' experiences of mentoring justice-involved adolescents: A narrative of developing cultural consciousness through connection. *J. Community Psychol.* **2020**, *48*, 2309–2325. [[CrossRef](#)]
101. Meltzer, A.; Saunders, I. Cultivating supportive communities for young people: Mentor pathways into and following a youth mentoring program. *Child. Youth Serv. Rev.* **2020**, *110*, 104815. [[CrossRef](#)]
102. Worker, S.M.; Espinoza, D.M.; Kok, C.M.; Go, C.; Miller, J.C. Volunteer outcomes and impact: The contributions and consequences of volunteering in 4-H. *J. Youth Dev.* **2020**, *15*, 6–31. [[CrossRef](#)]
103. Sánchez, B.; Anderson, A.J.; Weiston-Serdan, T.; Catlett, B.S. Anti-racism education and training for adult mentors who work with BIPOC adolescents. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **2021**, *36*, 686–716. [[CrossRef](#)]
104. Malti, T.; Noam, G.G. Social-emotional development: From theory to practice. *Eur. J. Dev. Psychol.* **2016**, *13*, 652–665. [[CrossRef](#)]
105. Noam, G.G.; Malti, T.; Karcher, M.J. Mentoring relationships in developmental perspective. In *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*; DuBois, D., Karcher, M.J., Eds.; SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2014; pp. 99–116. [[CrossRef](#)]
106. Brinegar, K.; Caskey, M.M. Developmental Characteristics of Young Adolescents: Research Summary. Association for Middle Level Education. 2022. Available online: <https://www.amle.org/developmental-characteristics-of-young-adolescents/> (accessed on 25 August 2024).
107. Busey, C.L.; Gainer, J. Arrested development: How This We Believe utilizes colorblind narratives and racialization to socially construct early adolescent development. *Urban Rev.* **2022**, *54*, 85–112. [[CrossRef](#)]
108. Harrison, L.M.; Hurd, E.; Brinegar, K.M. Exploring the convergence of developmentalism and cultural responsiveness. In *Equity and Cultural Responsiveness in the Middle Grades*; Brinegar, K.M., Harrison, L.M., Hurd, E., Eds.; Information Age Publishing: Charlotte, NC, USA, 2019; pp. 3–21.
109. Karcher, M.J.; Sass, D.A.; Herrera, C.; DuBois, D.L.; Heubach, J.; Grossman, J.B. Pathways by which case managers' match support influences youth mentoring outcomes: Testing the systemic model of youth mentoring. *J. Community Psychol.* **2023**, *51*, 3243–3264. [[CrossRef](#)]
110. Spencer, R.; Gowdy, G.; Drew, A.L.; McCormack, M.J.; Keller, T.E. It takes a village to break up a match: A systemic analysis of formal youth mentoring relationship endings. *Child Youth Care Forum* **2020**, *49*, 97–120. [[CrossRef](#)]

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.