



The [Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs](#) (Working Group) recognizes the importance of [Positive Youth Development](#) (PYD) and works to ensure that current research-based content is included on [youth.gov](#) and to identify resources that support federal efforts in promoting positive youth development and youth engagement. The Working Group created a national **Research Agenda on PYD**, thus giving researchers, practitioners, and policymakers a point of reference for future policies, programs, and research, including evaluations. This Research Agenda on PYD can also be used to stimulate conversations and increase attention to this topic area across agencies. In addition, the research agenda can serve to increase funding support for research and serve as a guide for university scholars and students. For more information on the development of the Research Agenda, see Dymnicki et al. (2016). Developing a Federal Research Agenda for Positive Youth Development: Identifying Gaps in the Field and an Effective Consensus Building Approach. *Journal of Youth Development*, 11.

This document describes efforts by the Working Group to identify key questions for a federal PYD research agenda to address. The questions below were developed through consultations with participants from many federal agencies who specialize in different areas of research work. The most current version of the research agenda is presented here. Three research domains were identified by the federal colleagues: (1) conceptual issues of PYD, (2) data sources and indicators, and (3) program implementation and effectiveness, based on the work done by National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002) and more recent work in the field.

### **Research Questions Related to Conceptual Issues of PYD**

1. To what extent do PYD principles<sup>1</sup> increase the likelihood that practices<sup>2</sup> or programs lead to improved outcomes for youth and adults?
2. How can PYD be measured at both the individual and contextual (e.g., relationship, community, society, system) levels?

### **Research Questions Related to Data Sources and Indicators**

3. What are valid and reliable measures of PYD?
4. What are the core competencies needed by staff (e.g., practitioners, providers) to implement PYD practices or programs?

### **Research Questions Related to Program Implementation and Effectiveness**

5. How can we measure the fidelity of PYD programs as they are being implemented?
6. How can we assess the extent to which fidelity is related to PYD program effectiveness?
7. How can we reliably measure dosage (e.g., frequency, duration, and intensity) of PYD programs? To what extent do these elements moderate program effectiveness and outcomes?
8. What are the features of the settings in which PYD programs are delivered that contribute to positive outcomes?
9. What modifications may need to be made to PYD programs to best serve the needs of diverse (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, poverty level, risk level) youth?
10. How can input from participating youth and staff be incorporated into the design and implementation of PYD program evaluations?

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1 *Principles* are a philosophy or approach emphasizing active support for the growing capacity of young people by individuals, organizations, and institutions, especially at the community level (Hamilton et al., 2004).

2 *Practices* are a planned set of activities, in which PYD principles are applied to foster the developmental process in young people (Hamilton et al., 2004).