



# CULTIVATING YOUTH MATTERING

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43%

of high school  
students felt like they  
did not matter to  
people in their  
communities.

20%

of middle school  
students have seriously  
thought about killing  
themselves.



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2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

# *Defining Mattering*

*“Mattering is the sense of being significant and valued by other people... People who believe they matter to others have a key protective resource that can buffer them from life stressors and challenges throughout their lives.” - Gordon Flett*

# CULTIVATING YOUTH MATTERING IS AN UPSTREAM APPROACH TO CHANGING DOWNSTREAM



# MATTERING DOMAINS

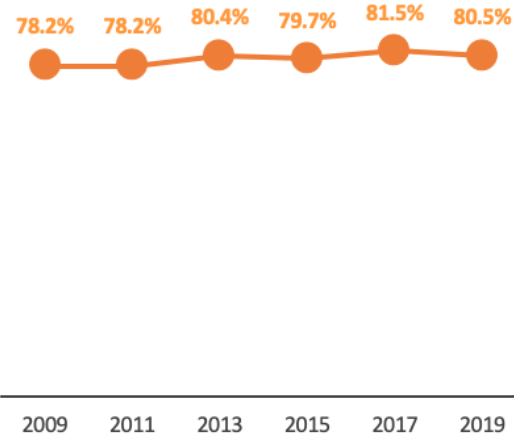
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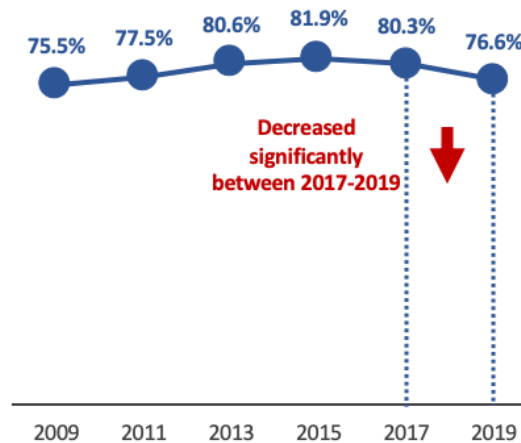
[www.maineresilience.org](http://www.maineresilience.org)

# RELATIONAL SUPPORTS

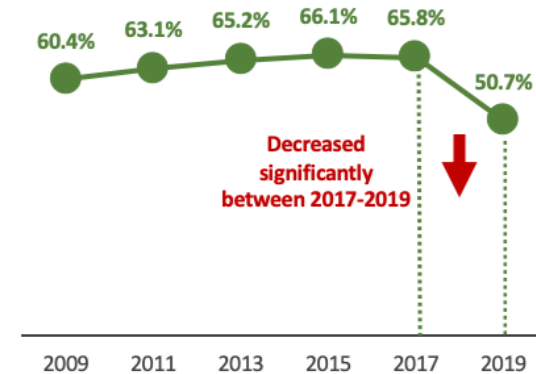
## MIYHS HS 2019: Assets and Supports



**80.5%** say they  
have at least one  
teacher who cares and  
supports them



**76.6%** say their  
parents help them  
succeed 'most of the  
time' or 'always'



**50.7%** say they  
have support from  
adults other than their  
parents

# MATTERING & CONNECTEDNESS

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## Adolescent Connectedness

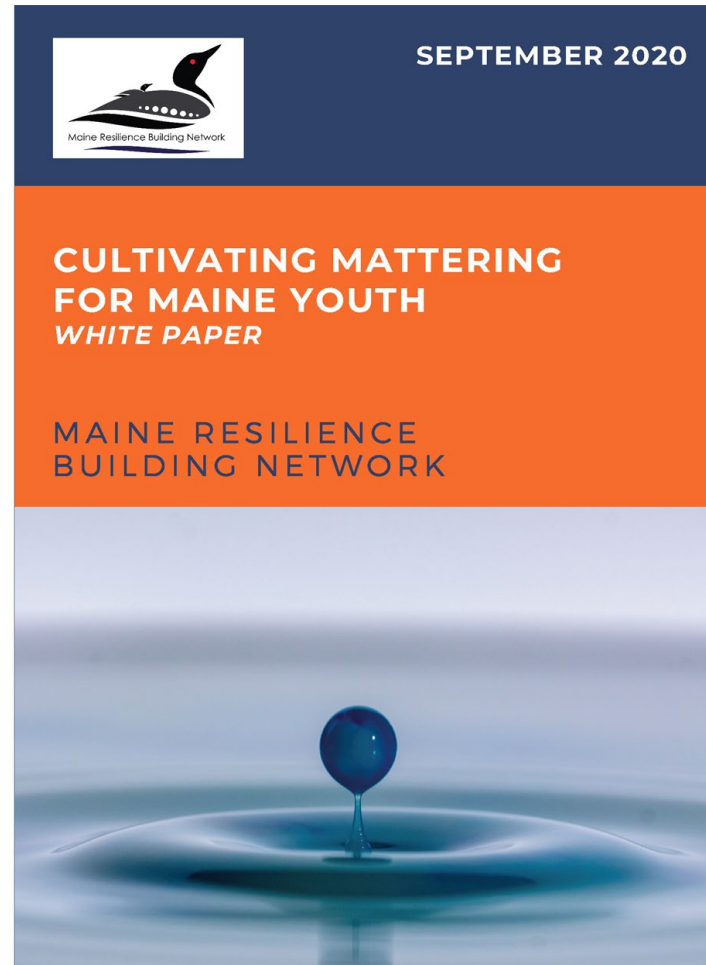


Youth Connectedness Is an Important Protective Factor for Health and Well-being

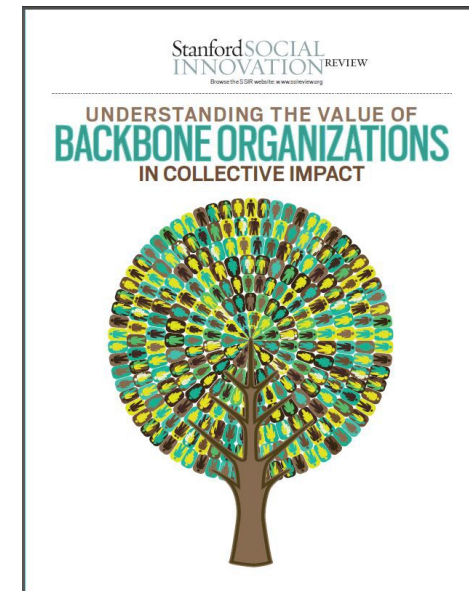
- Mattering is strongly connected to social connectedness which is recognized by the CDC as one of the five priority social determinants of health (SDOH)
- Youth Connectedness has a lasting effect—youth who feel connected at school and at home are 66% less likely to experience health risk behaviors



# Catalyzing Action- Cultivating Mattering for Maine Youth



[www.maineresilience.org](http://www.maineresilience.org)





# Cultivating Mattering for Maine Youth Thought Leaders Roundtables –Dec 2020

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Thought Leader Roundtable events were held  
on December 3rd & 9th, 2020



## Common Themes Discussed:

Need for rebuilding and leveraging school & community linkages

Importance of youth voice, youth advocacy and engagement

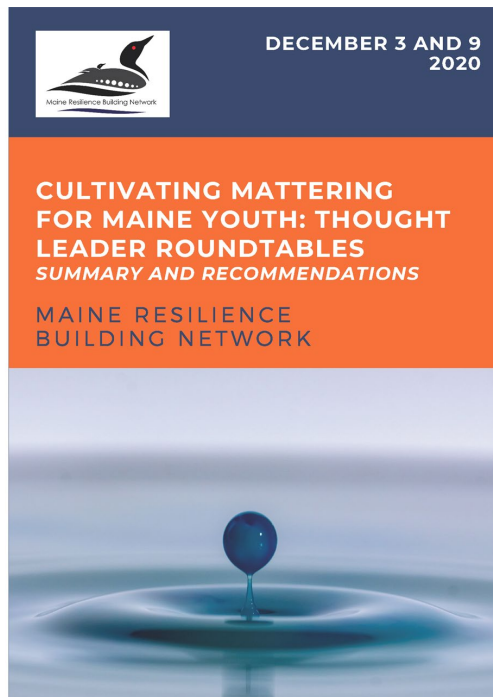
Need to support caregivers, teachers and youth development professionals

Importance of Restorative Practices, trauma informed & resilience-based systems

Connection and engagement of the business community

Alternative measurement of Mattering, including the recognition of social determinants of health, culture & equity

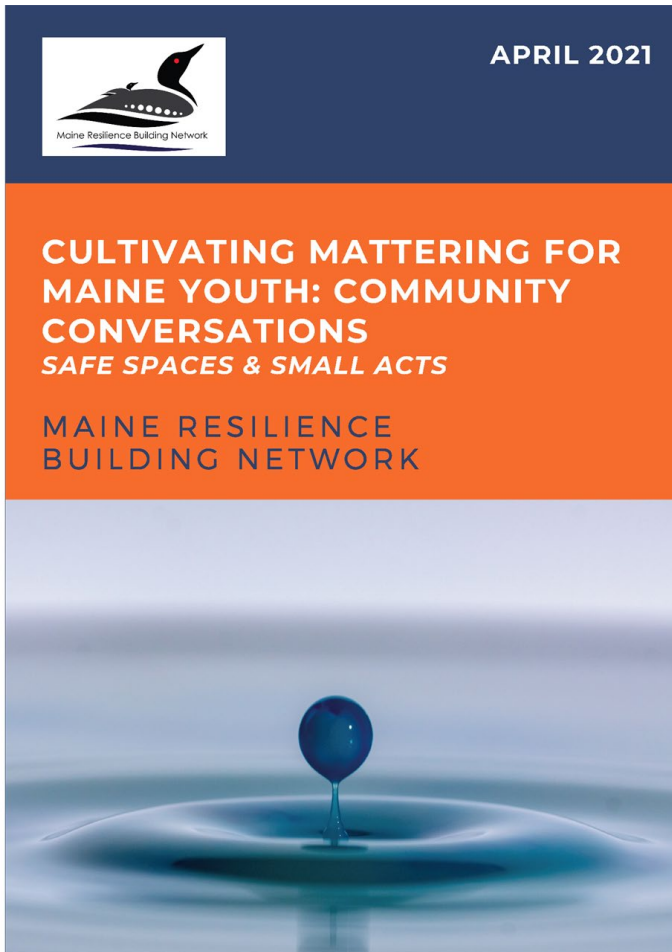
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# Cultivating Mattering for Maine Youth

## Community Conversations

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- Nine community conversations in each of the public health districts across Maine
- **Common Themes Discussed:**
  - Recognizing adult privilege & adult power
  - Elevating youth decision making & youth voice
  - Honoring small acts of mattering
  - Encouraging intergenerational learning
  - Spaces for connection (arts & nature)
  - Inequitable resources & programs across the state

# MATTERING INITIATIVE NEXT STEPS

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- Community-developed solutions are essential
- Cross-sector strategies are key
- Involvement of youth and those with lived experience is important



# MATTERING INITIATIVE NEXT STEPS

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- Community engagement



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People™

## Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Plans

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Closing the Gap With Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Plans funds 20 recipients to help accelerate actions in state, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions that prevent and reduce chronic diseases among people experiencing health disparities.

The conditions in which we are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age—known as [social determinants of health](#) (SDOH)—have a profound impact on health. They influence the opportunities available to us to practice healthy behaviors, enhancing or limiting our ability to live healthy lives.

Chronic diseases such as heart disease and stroke, cancer, diabetes, and obesity are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. Differences in SDOH contribute to the stark and persistent chronic disease disparities among racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups, systematically limiting opportunities for members of some groups to be healthy.



# MAINE YOUTH THRIVING

## A Guide for Community Action



### Maine Youth Thriving

A Guide for Community Action





# IMPACT

## Franklin County Youth Mattering Initiative

### HOW TO BUILD MORE AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

FROM THE MAINE RESILIENCE BUILDING NETWORK

Connectedness and a sense of mattering are some of the strongest protective factors we can offer children who need extra support.



#### BE YOURSELF

Young people, just like adults, are fully capable of telling the difference between sincerity and pretense. It's important to both model and live the value of being comfortable as yourself. This kind of visible self-love encourages young people to embrace their own identities and full selves too!

#### LET THEM MAKE DECISIONS

Young people have few opportunities to make decisions for themselves. Encourage self-determination by offering them the opportunity to pick where to go to dinner, the music playing in the car, or even what color to paint a communal space! It's important not to force them to make decisions, however, just offer them the opportunity.



#### MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE

Accept that some young people are not interested in connecting with adults they don't know. Respect their boundaries.

Use the technology they use if that is possible. We are lucky there are so many ways for us to communicate with young people!

Be aware of generational differences. In general, young adults have different values, language, technology dependence, and



## Mattering

Daily update · April 30, 2022

### NEWS

## United Way awards \$50000 grant for Youth Mental Health - Daily Bulldog

Daily Bulldog

It will bring together civic organizations, businesses, schools, and law enforcement to develop and implement a county-wide Youth **Mattering** program.

# ABOUT MRBN

All are welcome to attend our membership meetings!  
[info@maineresilience.org](mailto:info@maineresilience.org)

## Join MRBN

Become a member and receive free attendance at meetings as well as membership discounts at conferences and events

[www.maineresilience.org](http://www.maineresilience.org)