Relationships Matter

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Positive teacher-student relationships are associated with:
- Increasing student's feeling of safety at school  
  - Austin et al, Basch, Steinberg et al
- Increasing academic test scores  
  - Basch, CDC, Comer
- Increasing student understanding and meaningfulness of what is being taught  
  - Benard
- Reducing absenteeism  
  - Basch, CDC
- Decreasing student dropout  
  - Benard
- Decreasing student-student conflict  
  - Griggs et al
- Improving school climate  
  - Cohen et al, McClure et al
- Improving transition to school  
  - Pianta et al
- Decreasing risk-taking behavior  
  - Basch, CDC, Rudaskill et al
- Developing language skills  
  - O'Connor et al
- Improving self-esteem  
  - DeWit et al
- Decreasing incidences of depression  
  - DeWit et al
- And has been highlighted as beneficial to learning by the major US educational associations, including the Council of Chief State School Officers, National School Boards Association, American Association of School Administrators, and of course our own ASCD.

But it's not just teacher-student relationships. Positive family-school relationships have been shown to be associated with:
- Improving the development of student's social skills  
  - Powell et al
- Improving the development of student's mathematics skills  
  - Powell et al
- Promoting learning  
  - Christenson & Reschly
- Decreasing student behavior issues  
  - Powell et al
- Preschool social growth and academic development  
  - Marcon
- And increasing motivation to excel  
  - Wentzel.

And between peers. Studies have highlighted how positive peer relationships are associated with:
- Remaining in school  
  - Juvonen & Wentzel
- Remaining in community college  
  - Napoli
- Developing pro-social behavior  
  - Snyder
- And improving academic achievement  
  - Zitzmann.

And between teachers. Positive relationships between new and experienced teachers have shown to:
- Decreasing teacher attrition  
  - Gratch
- And minimizing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of low personal accomplishment  
  - Grayson & Alvarez.

All relationship matters.

And in combination these relationships provide a broader support network and deeper influence. Studies have shown that teachers, family and peers all can have a positive effect on
- Developing resilience  
  - Benard
- Reducing dropout  
  - Pittman, Dunn et al
- Improving attendance  
  - Epstein, Klem
- Increasing learning  
  - Klem

All in all -- relationships matter. So the next time school improvement, turn-around, or reform efforts are discussed, ask whomever is talking how their plan develops what we know is key and cannot be overlooked -- relationships.