

Research Overview

Decades of research have shown that when students have positive relationships with their teachers, they are more likely to feel more motivated and engaged in school, develop positive social and emotional competencies, and perform better academically (*Cornelius-White, 2007; Gelbach et al., 2016; Osher et al., 2018; Wentzel, 2012*).

Evidence also shows that when schools focus on relationship-building, they can directly impact some of the biggest challenges in education: rising student absenteeism and incidences of behavior problems.

Rates of chronic absenteeism dropped in a set of middle and high schools that tested strategies to build connectedness (*The Grad Partnership, 2024*).

Students who feel more connected at school are less likely to report emotional distress, and are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, and to graduate high school (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023*).

Along provides an efficient way for teachers to hear from and connect with their students—all while increasing trust and student ownership. Educators can then effectively apply insights to support all students and improve instruction by utilizing Along's research-informed content co-created with partners. Along offers a series of reflection questions based on relevant, highly-sought after topics designed to strengthen teacher-student connection, which in turn can lead to higher engagement in the classroom.

Along offers:

A library of scaffolded and open-response reflection questions that express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities—the five essential components of the Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Framework, identified through years of applied research.

Why does this matter? Studies have shown that students who experience those five elements in relationships with their teachers feel more connected to school, are more motivated to work hard, and earn higher grades than students whose relationships with teachers do not capture these elements of relationships (*Scales et al., 2019*).

Guidance for educators to take action on what students share, including tips for adjusting instruction to challenge students appropriately and classroom activities to help students recognize their strengths, reflect on what makes learning matter, and build community.

Why does this matter? Research shows that when students experience strong instruction and high expectations, they learn more (*TNTP, 2018*).

All of Along's content is developed in collaboration with diverse students, educators, and researchers, such as GripTape and Black Teacher Collaborative, to ensure Along is grounded in the science of relationships and the experiences of teachers and students.

Learn more at Along.org

