

SELECTIVE PROGRAMS (TIER 2)

As discussed previously, selective programs (tier 2) target subgroups of students from the general population presenting a certain level of risk of disengagement or school dropout, based on their individual, family, community, or neighborhood characteristics. As an example, the *Bridges to High School Program/Proyecto Puentes a la Secundaria* (Gonzales et al., 2012) is a selective program developed for low-socioeconomic (SES) seventh-grade Hispanic students and their parents having English or Spanish as a primary language spoken at home. Like other similar brief family interventions (Stormshak, Fosco, & Dishion, 2010), the main objectives of this program are to strengthen the home and school environment connection, develop youth competencies, reduce substance use, internalizing and externalizing symptoms, and increase students' discipline with school and academic performance. In turn, these improvements are meant to facilitate a successful transition to middle and high school. This program, which runs over 9 weeks, includes three main components: a parent component, an adolescent component, and a family strengthening component. During the parent sessions, the aim is to teach effective parenting strategies—including strategies intended to promote student engagement and improve family cohesion—using active learning activities on different topics (e.g., supportive parenting, discipline, positive reinforcement, and communicating with teachers). In a separate room, adolescent sessions address coping strategies to deal with interpersonal and school stress, ways to improve social skills, exploration of future goals to strengthen academic engagement, and strategies to improve family cohesion. Finally, joint family sessions, which follow the separate youth and parent sessions, provide opportunities for participants to practice together the skills learned as a way to increase family cohesion. The efficacy assessment of this program (see Gonzales et al., 2012) was realized in four urban schools chosen for their high proportion of Mexican Americans, the availability of families speaking either English or Spanish as a primary language, their similar size and structure (i.e., serving seventh and eighth graders only), and for their high proportion (75%–85%) of students eligible for free or reduced lunches. Overall, results of this assessment which was based on an experimental design showed that the program improved parents' and adolescents' skills, as well as behavioral and affective engagement, that is, school liking and school perseverance, even though only a third of the families attended all nine sessions (while two-thirds attended at least five sessions).

The *Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment* (RYPEN; [Martin, 2005](#)) is another selective program that has been implemented among 14- to 16-year-old students considered at risk based on various difficulties (e.g., decreased motivation, low self-esteem, vocational confusion, and school failure). The goal of this program is to provide an opportunity for youth to think about themselves, where they are in their life, and where they are headed, to favor their motivation and academic engagement, in terms of its three dimensions. The program focuses on mastery orientation (e.g., focusing on learning, skills development), optimistic and positive orientation, development of teamwork, cooperation, and quality of relationship. These themes are covered in two sessions. The first session allows adolescents to understand the motivation and the barriers to change, whereas the second aims at developing strategies to strengthen engagement and motivation in school. Overall, the assessment of this program, based on a quasi-experimental design, showed that the intervention yielded positive effects on student motivation 8 weeks after implementation, as well as on students' behavioral (i.e., persistence), affective (i.e., valuing of school), and cognitive (i.e., planning and study management) engagement.

INTENSIVE PROGRAMS (TIER 3)

Intensive prevention programs (tier 3) are designed for students exhibiting important risk factors, typically for a long period of time, such as school failure, truancy, interpersonal problems, delinquency, drug use, anti-social behaviors, anxiety, or depression. The *Collaborative Life Skill Program* ([Pffiffer, Villodas, Kaiser, Rooney, & McBurnett, 2013](#)) is a good example of intensive intervention for students presenting inattention and/or hyperactive-impulsive behaviors. This program aims to reduce the severity of these children's attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms, while increasing their social skills, academic achievement, and functioning.

including their cognitive (i.e., organizational skills) and behavioral engagement (i.e., self-control). Divided into 12 sessions, the program includes three main components: a parent-training intervention, a classroom intervention, and a child-oriented intervention. The parent-training component includes 10 1-hour group meetings focusing on themes such as the effective use of commands, rewards, and discipline, and homework time. The classroom intervention component includes two group meetings with teachers and two or three individual meetings with the children, their parents, and the teacher. It also employs a school-home daily report card where teachers monitor a specific classroom challenge (academic work, social interactions, etc.) for each target children, as well as a homework plan, and classroom accommodations (e.g., appropriate use of praise, better seating in the classroom). Finally, the children component comprises nine group sessions with the targeted children during which youths are taught different skills (e.g., self-control, organizing and completing work, following classroom routines). It also includes two celebratory parties to which parents and teachers are invited. Results of the randomized controlled trial showed that this program contributed to improving student cognitive engagement (i.e., organizational skills) and academic functioning.

Check & Connect (C&C) (Christenson, Stout, & Pohl, 2012) is an intensive prevention program, which aims to promote student behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement in school to support academic achievement, school perseverance and success, as well as to prevent school dropout. This program is described in depth elsewhere in this handbook (see Chapter 18: Implementing Check & Connect: Lessons from Two International Effectiveness Experiments), but overall it targets students at risk of school dropout, mostly based on their repeated truancy, disruptive behaviors in school, low academic grades, and repeated failures. This program includes four components: mentoring, systematic monitoring of student attitudes, behaviors, and achievement (*Check*), individualized interventions (*Connect*), and communication with families. *Mentors* play a major role in the intervention. Each selected student is matched with a mentor who promotes student engagement and perseverance in school and is responsible for implementing the other components. The *Check* component refers to the systematic weekly monitoring of student attendance, participation, classroom behaviors, and work completion, while the *Connect* component refers to individualized weekly interventions put in place to help students in deal-

ing with their difficulties. Finally, communication with the family is intended to promote parent involvement in support of children's academic success. These communications are initiated by the mentor and are meant to favor the development of a significant relationship with the family.

Many efficacy and effectiveness assessments of the C&C program have been realized in different contexts and countries (Archambault et al., 2016; Heppen, Zeiser, Holtzman, O'Cummings, Christenson, & Pohl, 2018; Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004; Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo & Hurley, 1998; Sinclair, Christenson, & Thurlow, 2005). Evaluations that were based on experimental or quasi-experimental designs suggest that the program increases behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement. More specifically, they highlight that C&C is associated with increased attendance for students in K-12, and those with and without disabilities. In elementary school the program is also associated with student academic achievement and an increased sense of belonging at school. In high school the program has been associated with increased accrual of credits, but not with academic achievement (i.e., GPA or scores on standardized tests). Finally, there is no evidence that C&C increases graduation rates within 4 years, but this program has demonstrated its capacity to keep students in school and keep them making progress (Sinclair et al., 2005).

It has also been shown that the C&C program outcomes vary greatly depending on implementation fidelity and context (Goulet, Archambault, Janosz, & Christenson, 2018; Heppen et al., 2018). Indeed, while C&C effects have been found to be greater when the program's components were implemented with high fidelity, contextual factors seem to support or hinder intervention efforts. For example, some authors showed that implementing C&C problem-solving interventions with high fidelity allows for a greater increase in student cognitive engagement (Goulet et al., 2018). Furthermore, the association between implementation fidelity and effects was found to be greater when mentors were adequately selected, rigorously trained, and when they could establish a larger support network for targeted students (Goulet et al., 2018; Heppen et al., 2018).

MULTILEVEL PROGRAMS

Many programs that aim to promote student engagement per se or as a way to prevent school dropout are multilevel, that is, they include universal, selective, and/or intensive-level interventions. *Careers Academies* (Kemple & Snipes, 2000) is a good example of such programs, as this universal intervention also comprises selective components. It targets high school students, and especially those who are at high risk of dropping out.

The principal goal of this program is to promote student engagement defined in terms of school attendance, by providing the students with work-related learning opportunities, and establishing pathways to facilitate the passage from high school to college or postsecondary employment. This program has three core elements: (1) a school-within-school structure in which students remain with the same group of teachers across a 3- or 4-year period; (2) a curriculum combining academic and vocational training covering different themes such as finance, health, communication, and technology; and (3) the development of partnerships between schools, local employers, higher education institutions, and communities as a way to provide students with career development opportunities, mentoring, financial support, etc. Results of a randomized controlled trial (Kemple & Snipes, 2000) indicated that, although students who presented the highest risk of dropping out were less likely to remain enrolled in a career academy through the end of grade 12, the high-risk students who remained in the program presented lower dropout rates and behavioral disengagement (truancy) as compared to their counterparts who did not participate. Yet, for students presenting a medium risk or low risk of dropout, involvement in a career academy was not associated with school perseverance or engagement (i.e., attendance).

The *Links to Learning* (L2L) is also a multilevel program implemented among fourth graders to favor their behaviors at home and in school, including their academic engagement. It includes two universal components implemented at the classroom-level, as well as intensive-level components for students presenting behavioral disorders. This program incorporates interventions delivered in the family as well as in classrooms by a team including a community mental health practitioner, a parent advocate, and teachers. The Good Behavior Game (a contingency-based behavior management program; Flower, McKenna, Bunuan, Muething, & Vega, 2014) and Peer-Assisted Learning (a tutoring reading intervention in which tutees who are less skilled readers are paired with tutors with stronger reading skills; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Burish, 2000) are both implemented universally by teachers. In addition, targeted students, their parents and teachers participate in more intensive interventions, in which parents and teachers fill out a daily report card to monitor behaviors and record reinforcement given to the child (Kelley & McCain, 1995). Moreover, teachers regularly send good news notes certificates to parents underscoring positive aspects of their children's behavior (Lahey et al., 1977). Finally, targeted families also par-

ticipate in an 8-week family intervention (individually or in group) focusing on home-school communication, home routines, as well as homework and reading support. Individualized case management services are also offered to families upon request. The fidelity assessment (Atkins et al., 2015) of the classroom-based components of L2L showed that teachers implemented the universal strategies with higher fidelity (76%–80% fidelity rates) than they did the targeted ones (53%–56% fidelity rates). At the family level, although no information is available on parents' attendance for the family component of the intervention, most parents reported having spoken with the mental health provider or parent advocate at least a few times or many times (82% and 47% of parents). Moreover, parents reported that they had received home visits at least a few times (40%) or many times (18%). Results of the 3-year multimethod, multiinformant efficacy trial based on an experimental design indicate that the program had positive impacts on children's behavioral engagement, social skills, academic competence, on-task behaviors, and family use of mental health services.

The *Achievement for Latinos Through Academic Success* (ALAS; Larson & Rumberger, 1995) is another multilevel, selective, and intensive intervention. The initial intervention targeted two different groups of Latino high school students, one group of students who were formally identified by the school district as presenting learning disabilities or severe affective disturbances, and another group, the high-risk group, who were not identified by the district but who presented characteristics that differentiated them from regular students in their program and placed them at high risk. The goal of this 3-year intervention was to prevent school dropout by promoting student behavioral (i.e., participation and attendance), affective (i.e., bonding), and cognitive engagement (i.e., self-regulation through problem-solving), as well as their perseverance in school. The program uses a multifaceted approach and includes different strategies focusing on adolescents, their school, family, and community. The adolescent-focused component includes problem-solving, counseling, attendance monitoring, and enhancement of school affiliation. The school-focused components involve frequent teachers feedback to students and their parents via ALAS counselors, as well as attendance monitoring. The family-focused component connects families to community services and trains parents to help them develop skills to better participate in school, guide, and monitor their adolescent. Finally, the community component involves enhancing exchanges and collaboration among the community resources working with adolescents and parents as well as developing new strategies to facilitate the use of these services by the families. Based on an experimental design, the efficacy assessment of this 3-year program suggest that it yields positive impacts on many academic outcomes, such as credits earned, school perseverance, and behavioral engagement (lower absenteeism). Moreover, participants with learning disabilities, severe affective disturbances, or those at risk for other reasons presented lower dropout rates compared to similar peers from the control groups, and this gap

Finally, the *Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports* (PBIS) (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005) is a three-tier multilevel (universal, selective, and intensive) intervention that can be implemented from kindergarten to grade 12. This 3-year school-wide program has four aims: to decrease the rates of punitive responses to student behavior problems, to increase students' behavioral engagement (i.e., decrease misconduct), to improve their academic achievement, and to strengthen school–family partnerships. At the universal level the program includes six main components: (1) fixing consensus-driven expectations for student behaviors, (2) teaching interpersonal skills to the students, (3) providing them with systematic reinforcement, (4) monitoring the intervention efficacy, (5) formulating discipline practices, and (6) reducing or eliminating the reactive punitive strategies school staff are using with students and replacing them with previously identified proactive ones. At the selective level the same components are important, but some students presenting more behavioral difficulties receive increased instruction and increased adult supervision in small groups. They also have more opportunities to practice with self-regulation and social skills, and for positive reinforcement and academic support [Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), 2018]. Finally, students who exhibit important problem behaviors are exposed to the intensive level. Based on the same aforementioned guidelines, these students receive highly individualized support and interventions, such as function-based behavioral intervention, which is based on information obtained by observing antecedent and outcomes of student behaviors. Results of the experimental efficacy assessment indicate that the program has a significant impact on school safety and student reading performance. It also has a positive contribution on student behavioral engagement (i.e., lower rate of office disciplinary referrals); yet, this last finding remains limited, since no pretraining data were available for this outcome.

Overall, the programs that we identified differ based on their objectives and expected outcomes, length, and intervention components. Further, all programs do not align the same way with the general requirements associated with effective prevention and intervention strategies. The following section draws a summary of the 10 previously discussed programs based on these criteria.

Program Objectives and Expected Outcomes

In terms of program objectives, all programs that we selected aim at promoting student engagement per se, or as a way to reduce problem behaviors (e.g., substance use, internalizing or externalizing problems), enhance academic functioning, and prevent school dropout. Yet, two programs, *Bridges to High School* and *Career Academies*, also aim to facilitate transitions to middle school or college. Moreover, among programs promoting student engagement as a principal objective, the way engagement is conceptualized vary. For instance, the *Iowa Strengthening Families* and the *Bridges to High School* programs defined and measured engagement as a global construct, while all other programs have objectives and expected outcomes related to the specific dimensions of engagement (i.e., behavioral, affective, and cognitive). Moreover, most of these programs focus principally on the behavioral dimension of engagement through the assessment of indicators, such as school attendance or absenteeism, participation or misconduct, and persistence or withdrawal.

Conversely, few programs explicitly include the development of student affective engagement as the main objective. Yet, this aim remains often secondary or implicit in many of them (e.g., *Seattle Development Project*, *C&C*, *ALAS*), as they emphasize student interest, as well as the development of positive relationships with adults or mentors in school. Although the principal aim of these programs is not to promote student engagement per se, they have been shown to have positive effects on this outcome, and especially on students' affiliation or bonding with respect to school. The *Career Academies* intervention, which promotes the development of a diversified curriculum that is well aligned with students' interests, is a good example of a program that implicitly promotes students' affective engagement. Yet, there is no evidence that this program has an impact on this dimension.

Finally, the *RYPEN* and the *Collaborative Life Skill Program* are the only one targeting student cognitive engagement by intervening on student organizational and self-regulation skills (e.g., planning, revision). Overall, a closer look at the programs selected clearly highlights that the cognitive dimension of engagement is definitely the one that has been less put up front. Yet, the picture would have probably been different if we had also included classroom instructional interventions.

Program Length

Programs also vary importantly in terms of length. Some interventions (e.g., *RYPEN*, *Collaborative Life Skill Program*), are quite brief, that is, from 2 to 12 sessions. Yet, other programs extend over 2, 3, or even 6 years (i.e., *Seattle Social Development Project*). The various lengths of these programs probably have consequences on the long-term sustainment of their impact. Yet, since most of them did not make follow-up assessments, it was not possible to verify this claim.

Intervention Components

Selected programs have different components at different levels: (1) school and classroom, (2) families/parents, and (3) youths. Indeed, most interventions that have a universal focus (e.g., *Career Academies*, *PBIS*) either intervene on school organization (e.g., school-within-school; school-wide behavioral management system) or propose activities across the whole school on different themes (e.g., conduct management, social and interpersonal skills). Yet, like other programs (e.g., *L2L*, *ALAS*), they also propose to intervene at the classroom-level, by addressing facets of the classroom experience, such as classroom instruction and curriculum, proactive classroom management strategies, teacher monitoring and feedback to students, and activities promoting student learning and engagement, mostly at the behavioral or cognitive level.

A significant number of programs also include a family component. These interventions have different objectives, but many of them aim at increasing parents' knowledge about youth development or promoting the development of parental skills as a way to facilitate family cohesion, allow parents to better manage their children's behavioral disengagement, and reduce the possibility that their children adopt delinquent, risky behaviors (e.g., drug use). Lastly, many of these interventions also intend to help parents support their children academically and promote their engagement in school or to facilitate parents' access to different community services that could support them effectively in their parenting role.

Finally, with the exception of *Career Academies*, all programs include youth sessions targeting the improvement of their engagement in school, either directly or through the development of their skills or abilities. These group or individual intervention components focus on problem-solving, social skills development, or on the promotion of autonomy and stress management skills. They also enable youth to develop abilities to help them deal with negative peer influence or with parent or school demands. Many selective or intensive programs (e.g., *Collaborative Life Skill Program*, *C&C*, *L2L*, *ALAS*) also include a monitoring component. Through monitoring, teachers, counselors, or mentors closely monitor student engagement based on behavioral (e.g., attendance, classroom behaviors, homework completion, and participation) or cognitive indicators (e.g., work organization skills).

Alignment With Effective Program Requirements

Finally, although many programs in the field of student engagement do not meet the requirements previously mentioned to be considered effective, we can confidently state that the programs reported in our review do not suffer of such limitation. For instance, the programs that we chose are based on multiple components, incorporate training sessions for practitioners leading implementation, seem to be implemented with sufficient dosage, and have been evaluated rigorously. Moreover, they are based on clear, age-appropriate objectives, have solid theoretical foundations, and promote the development of positive relationships with students. Yet, many of these programs still present some limits. First, except for *C&C* and *L2L*, the fidelity and implementation processes of most programs—that is, correspondence between the program planned and implemented and the influential factors affecting the implementation fidelity (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004)—have not been reported and evaluated. Second, with the exception of certain programs that specifically target students from minority group populations (i.e., *ALAS*, *Bridges to High School*), most interventions do not state clearly whether they considered participant sociocultural background characteristics. Third, all selective and intensive programs, as well as many universal programs (except *Career Academies* and *PBIS*) fail to address school practices and organization—that is, organization of groups and of the school curriculum. This limitation restrains these programs' scope, as they either only reach a specific population (for selective or intensive programs) or target-specific classroom behaviors instead of focusing on student overall experience in school. To finish, although some intervention programs, such as the *Seattle Social Development Project* and *C&C*, have been implemented in the early school years, most programs are implemented quite late in the adolescent years. As a result, the effects of these programs on school graduation remain quite limited, especially when students' trajectory of disengagement is more firmly embedded and harder to change.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While many studies suggest that students present different patterns of disengagement and that those who eventually drop out vary in terms of risk factors, profiles, as well as in term of the intensity and nature of severe stressful life events they experience in the few months before they dropout (Dupéré et al., 2018; Janosz et al., 2000; Wang & Fredricks, 2014), there is still an important gap between the current knowledge that we have on student engagement and dropout and the way prevention and intervention programs are currently constructed (Freeman & Simonsen, 2015).

As a next step, there is thus a clear need to develop, implement, and evaluate multilevel prevention and intervention programs that consider the timing and heterogeneity of student disengagement trajectories leading to school dropout. While some of these programs need to start early, from the first years of schooling, efforts should also be made to target and intervene with older adolescents who experience severe stress or show signs of disengagement. Moreover, while authors have shown that children and especially adolescent internalizing difficulties could act either as an antecedent or as an outcome of student disengagement (Wang & Fredricks, 2014), there is a clear need to integrate specific objectives on youth internalizing problem prevention in broader, multilevel and/or multicomponent student engagement programs.

Compared to the other dimensions of engagement, the affective dimension is often at the lowest level or showing the steepest decline over time and, even for students who will eventually complete school (Archambault, Janosz, Morizot, et al., 2009). It is also well recognized as an important antecedent of student cognitive and behavioral involvement in school. Considering that and the fact that the promotion of student belongingness and interest in school is not often a main program objective, there is also a need now for research to develop effective prevention and intervention strategies that directly address this dimension of engagement.

Lastly, the fact that very few interventions have been evaluated using rigorous, quasi-experimental, or experimental designs is problematic. More worrying still, however, is the fact that, even in most programs that have been rigorously assessed, there is still no systematic check of intervention implementation fidelity. In other

words, in most cases, there is no way to know whether there is a close correspondence between the key components of the program in theory and the intervention that has actually been implemented (Berkel, Mauricio, Schoenfelder, & Sandler, 2011). In most cases the implementation processes, namely the main individual, contextual, or environmental factors influencing implementation fidelity (Rossi et al., 2004), also remain unknown. As a result, it remains quite difficult to establish the program key ingredients that are effective, in what conditions, and for whom. Without a doubt, providing clear answers to these central questions is a necessary next step.

CONCLUSION

In the last decade, researchers have invested major efforts into understanding how student engagement in school develops, under what circumstances, so as to better understand the resulting consequences. Although there is still much work to be done, we now know much more about the processes leading some students to disengage and dropout. Effective and efficient programs favoring student engagement for its own sake, or as a means to promote youth positive development and school completion, are also quite numerous. Yet, the gap between what we know about the student disengagement process and what we are currently doing to prevent it is far from ideal. A better balance between the theoretical understanding of the construct and the interventions, mechanisms, and contexts promoting student engagement would ultimately lead to a better, more adjusted answer to students' individual needs, as it would also enable a better fit between these student needs and the ever-increasing demands of their school environment. By developing rigorous research-based interventions that respond appropriately to students with various individual, socioeconomic, psychosocial, and family characteristics, researchers and practitioners can certainly collaborate to support schools in their mission of preparing and empowering the next generation.

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Profiles of School Disengagement: Not All Disengaged Students are Alike

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Increasing student engagement is a mechanism to both promote positive academic outcomes and reduce involvement in negative behaviors. Students who are engaged in school earn higher grades and have more favorable psychological adjustments (Li & Lerner, 2011; Reeve, 2013; Wang & Peck, 2013). In contrast, disengagement in school is predictive of higher problem behaviors, delinquency, and substance use (Wang & Fredricks, 2014). Engagement declines from elementary through secondary school, with declines being particularly severe for low-income youth of color (Benner & Graham, 2009; Wigfield et al., 2015). However, not all youth follow this developmental pattern. Instead, person-centered analytic techniques show that there is a large diversity in both profiles of engagement and disengagement and developmental trajectories in engagement and disengagement over time (Janosz, Archambault, Morizot, & Pagani, 2008; Li & Lerner, 2011). Furthermore, there are many reasons why students are disengaged and dropout of school, and the design of interventions should reflect these differences (Wang & Degol, 2014).

This chapter has several goals. First, we describe how engagement and disengagement have been conceptualized in the literature and then present qualitative findings from interviews that were conducted with students on how they make sense of these two constructs. Next, we describe person-centered analytic techniques and outline different profiles of engaged and disengaged students that have been identified in the literature using these methods. We then present an example of research using person-centered analytic techniques to identify different profiles of disengaged students. This chapter concludes with an overview of three profiles of disengaged students

that have been identified in the literature: (1) behaviorally disengaged, (2) emotionally disengaged, and (3) cognitively and emotionally disengaged students. For each profile, we describe a specific case and outline some potential interventions that could increase engagement for this group of students.

WHAT IS ENGAGEMENT AND DISENGAGEMENT?

The most prevalent conceptualization in the literature is that engagement is a multidimensional construct that consists of three distinct, yet interrelated, dimensions: behavioral, emotional/affective, and cognitive engagement (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). *Behavioral engagement* has been defined in terms of participation in learning and school-based activities and the absence of disruptive behavior (Fredricks et al., 2004). *Emotional engagement* focuses on the extent of positive (and negative) reactions to school, teachers, and peers (Finn, 1989; Voelkl, 1997). Finally, *cognitive engagement* refers to students' use of deep learning strategies directed toward understanding and mastering knowledge (Fredricks et al., 2004; Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988). More recently, a few scholars have added social engagement to reflect the quality of students' social interactions in the context of classroom tasks and the broader school context (Linnenbrink-Garcia, Rogat, & Koskey, 2011; Rimm-Kaufman, Baroody, Larsen, Curby, & Abry, 2015; Wang, Fredricks, Ye, Hofkens, & Schall, 2016). Considering engagement

as a multidimensional construct has the potential to provide a richer characterization of how students think, act, and feel in school, than research on any single component can offer.

Disengagement is also theorized to consist of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions (Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008; Wang, Fredricks, Ye, Hofkens, & Schall Linn, 2017). However, until recently, much of the prior research has assumed that engagement and disengagement are on a continuum, and disengagement is merely the absence of engagement. This approach fails to take into account the range of ways that students can express disengagement, and the fact that disengagement from school reflects more than just the absence of engagement but also the presence of maladaptive processes and states (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009).

Indeed, researchers have found that engagement and disengagement are both conceptually and methodologically distinguishable constructs that make unique contributions to student outcomes (Skinner et al., 2008; Wang, Chow, Hofkens, & Salmela-Aro, 2015; Wang et al., 2017). For example, Wang et al. (2017) used mixed methods to develop and present evidence in support of the validity of newly developed school engagement and disengagement scales.¹ They verified that school engagement was characterized by one global engagement construct and one global disengagement construct with each global construct consisting of behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions. Student engagement and disengagement not only represented specific factors but also predicted students' academic achievement and behaviors differently. Furthermore, Skinner et al. (2008) documented differential associations between engagement (e.g., effort, interest) and disaffection (e.g., withdrawal, boredom), particularly with regard to the emotional aspects of both measures. These results suggest that engagement and disengagement in school may not be completely overlapping constructs, though more research is needed to determine both the commonalities and differences in these constructs.

WHAT IS SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AND DISENGAGEMENT: CASE EXAMPLES

ENGAGEMENT PROFILES

In the next section, we describe profiles of disengaged students that have been identified in the literature using person-centered analyses including (1) students who are behaviorally disengaged but have low-to-moderate emotional and cognitive engagement, (2) students who are emotionally disengaged but show moderate behavioral and cognitive engagement, and (3) students who are moderate to high on behavioral engagement but who are emotionally and cognitively disengaged. For each profile, we outline some of the causes and interventions that have been designed to increase engagement for this type of student.

	Emotionally and socially disengaged	Cognitively disengaged	Emotionally disengaged	Behaviorally disengaged
	(<i>N</i> = 319, 12.82%)	(<i>N</i> = 1583, 63.60%)	(<i>N</i> = 478, 19.20%)	(<i>N</i> = 109, 4.38%)
PROFILE VARIABLES				
Cognitive dis.	2.66 (0.60) ^a	2.42 (0.48)	2.71 (0.57) ^a	3.25 (0.77)
Behavior dis.	1.88 (0.52)	1.43 (0.38)	2.67 (0.44)	3.93 (0.57)
Emotional dis.	3.26 (0.99)	2.03 (0.82)	2.97 (0.94)	3.67 (1.08)
Social dis.	3.21 (0.57)	1.41 (0.45)	1.70 (0.51)	2.81 (0.90)
DEMOGRAPHIC				
Gender (1 = male) (%)	38.56	49.59	56.49	59.63
Race—White (%)	44.83 ^{a,b}	61.40	38.7 ^{a,c}	35.78 ^{b,c}
Race—Black (%)	36.36	24.07	40.79	47.71
Race—Other (%)	18.81	14.53	20.50	16.51
Free/Reduced lunch (%)	71.34 ^a	50.03	72.65 ^a	82.69
OUTCOME				
GPA	2.93 (0.80) ^a	3.36 (0.65)	2.74 (0.93) ^a	2.38 (1.04)
Absences	5.67 (8.18) ^a	2.75 (5.63)	5.15 (6.15) ^a	6.35 (7.07) ^a
Disruptive behavior	1.06 (1.90) ^{a,b}	0.64 (1.32) ^a	1.56 (3.27) ^{b,c}	2.18 (3.87) ^c
Educational aspiration	5.64 (2.03) ^a	6.36 (1.69)	5.46 (2.01) ^a	4.84 (2.32)

GPA, Grade point average; *Group 1*, low behavior disengagement, high emotional disengagement, moderate cognitive disengagement, and high social disengagement; *Group 2*, low behavioral disengagement, low emotional disengagement, low social disengagement, and high cognitive disengagement; *Group 3*, moderate behavioral disengagement, high emotional disengagement, moderate cognitive disengagement, and low social disengagement; *Group 4*, high behavioral disengagement, moderate emotional disengagement, moderate cognitive disengagement, and low social disengagement. All four group comparisons are significant with *P*s < .001. For each variable the groups with the same superscript indicate insignificant difference based on pairwise comparison.

In addition, for each profile, we present a case example from interviews that were conducted with students attending an urban middle and high school charter school in the Mid-Atlantic region during the winter and spring of 2017. The school district serves a large percentage of minority (73% African-American) and low-income students (73% on free or reduced lunch). We asked middle and high school administrators to identify racially diverse students who were showing signs of disengagement in school. The interview questions were organized around the following areas: (1) meaning of school engagement and disengagement, (2) the influence of motivational factors (e.g., value, ability, and coping) on engagement and disengagement, (3) the influence of classroom contextual factors (e.g., teachers, peers, and task) on engagement and disengagement, and (4) the influence of engagement on future educational and career aspirations.

Behaviorally Disengaged

Often the first sign that a student has begun to disengage from school is through observable behavioral indicators, such as being off task, having difficulty paying attention, inconsistent attendance, and disciplinary problems. The primacy of behavioral engagement is supported by the participation identification model (Finn, 1989), which assumes that engagement consists of two main components: participation (i.e., behavioral engagement) and identification/valuing of school (i.e., emotional engagement). According to Finn (1989), student engagement is composed of cycles of early participation (i.e., behavioral engagement) which leads to academic success, which results in greater school identification (i.e., emotional engagement), which then promotes ongoing participation.

In contrast, early forms of behavioral disengagement can lead students to have more difficulty forming positive relationships with their teachers and identifying with the school. Teachers tend to respond more negatively

to students whom they view as unmotivated, disruptive, or interpersonally disconnected (Stuhlmán & Pianta, 2001). In turn, teachers tend to have less positive relationships with these students, which results in students perceiving the school as an unwelcoming and alienating place, which puts students at greater risk for disengagement and eventually dropping out of school (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014). Lack of support from teachers may also lead behaviorally disengaged students to associate with other disengaged peers, which in turn can lead them to be more behaviorally disengaged over time (Finn & Zimmer, 2012).

Brian is an 11th grade Black male who is showing signs of behavioral disengagement (note: all names have been changed to pseudonyms). Brian's engagement in school fluctuates depending on the task and social context. He does like to be challenged and considers himself smart but sometimes does not want to do the work or put in the effort necessary to do well in school. He is easily bored and does not care about much of what he is learning in school, though he is more engaged when the content had some personal relevance to his life. He is a very social person and does like to participate in class. Unfortunately, his peers can easily distract him which leads to him getting in trouble. He does not like the strict disciplinary policies and wishes he had more of voice. He wants to be a psychologist so he can help people with their problems but worries about his grades and getting into college.

Many schools have developed early warning systems to identify students like Brian who have begun to show signs of behavioral disengagement. These warning systems collect information on attendance, not completing homework, behavioral referrals, and suspension rates. Students with a higher number of early warning signs have a higher likelihood of dropping out of school and higher rates of delinquency and substance use over time (Balfanz, Herzog, & Mac Iver, 2007; Henry, Knight, & Thornberry, 2012; Neild, Balfanz, & Herzog, 2007). The predictive power of these early warning indicators is used by schools to guide prevention efforts, such as providing students with tutoring and additional academic supports, assigning students a mentor who monitors their engagement and provides supports, and connecting youth to support services at school (i.e., attendance monitors, family supports, and counseling).

Classroom-behavior management strategies can also help to support behaviorally disengaged students like Brian. There will be fewer behavioral problems in classrooms where students have opportunity to actively engage

in meaningful tasks, where there is a positive social climate, and where there are clear expectations, rules, and routines to guide behavior (Fredricks, 2014; Wang & Degol, 2016). In addition, there are examples of class-wide programs, such as the Good Behavior Game, that use rewards or prizes to increase positive behaviors. Evaluations of the Good Behavior Game have shown reductions in aggressive and disruptive behaviors during both the middle and elementary school years (Sugai, Horner, & Gresham, 2002; Tankersley, 1995). Teachers can also work with students to create a behavioral contract that aims to eliminate behavioral problems in the classroom. This contract should outline the expected behaviors, unacceptable behaviors, the benefits or rewards of improving behavior, and the consequences for failing to improve behavior.

Other interventions aim to change teachers' relationships with disengaged students to help break the cycle of unsupportive teacher–student relationships leading to students feeling more disengaged over time. Prior research suggests that many teachers approach relationships with students like Brian from a cost–benefit perspective and struggle with whether the time, energy, and emotional investment required for developing relationships are worth the effort (Davis, 2006). Although it is more challenging to develop positive relationships with these students, there is evidence that these students benefit most from developing positive relationships with their teachers (Baker, Grant, & Morlock, 2008). A teacher's first impulse is often to punish students for resistant behavior. Instead, teachers should try to change the way they view this misbehavior and their relationships with these students. Rather than punishing them for misbehavior, teachers should see it as an opportunity to intervene and provide greater motivational and instructional supports (Fredricks, 2014; Furrer et al., 2014).

Emotionally Disengaged

Another common profile in schools is students who show low emotional engagement but moderate levels of behavioral and cognitive engagement. These students are bored, not interested in learning, and exhibit more negative emotions, such as sadness, anxiety, and frustration. These negative emotions can result in students becoming alienated from both the academic and social contexts (Skinner et al., 2009). When students experience negative emotions in school, it also becomes more difficult for them to constructively cope with stressful events, which can eventually lead them to give up (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). Negative emotions can impair achievement by reducing motivation and producing task-irrelevant thinking (Perkrum, 2006).

One reason why some students are emotionally disengaged is that they have failed to develop a connection with the adults and peers at their schools (Furrer et al., 2014; Juvenon, Espinosa, & Knifsend, 2012). Having close

and caring relationship with teachers and other adults at the school has been shown to be related to higher student engagement (Murray, 2009; Wang & Holcombe, 2010) and has been found to be a key factor in differentiating at-risk students who succeed in school from those who do not (Piantra, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). Unsupportive relationships in the classroom are often rejecting, chaotic, unpredictable, and coercive and controlling, which can result in students feeling unwelcome, incompetent, and pressured (Furrer et al., 2014). Unfortunately, these relationships are reciprocal over time, with unsupportive interactions between teachers and students leading students to become more disengaged over time (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

Another reason why some students may be emotionally disengaged is that mental health problems make it more difficult for them to learn and engage in school (Greenberg et al., 2003). The need to address students' mental health needs in school has taken on even greater urgency as the number of children and adolescents experiencing serious mental health challenges has dramatically increased (Merikangas et al., 2010). Students with mental health problems are more likely to miss school, have greater difficulty completing homework and concentrating in class, and find it more challenging to form relationships with their peers and teachers. There is growing recognition that school-based and school-linked mental health programs that provide early intervention, treatment, crisis intervention, and prevention can improve social, health, and academic outcomes (Adelman & Taylor, 1998; Greenberg et al., 2003).

Tara is a White sixth grade female who is an example of a student who is emotionally disengaged. She is mostly a C student and has experienced a drop in her engagement over time. She loves to draw and read but feels like what she is learning, especially in math and science, is not relevant to her life. She does like going to school because it is an escape from a difficult home life but has had mixed social experiences at school. She has a positive relationship with some of her teachers and is especially close to one staff member at the school. Unfortunately, she has few friends at school and is often made fun of by her peers for her appearance and her interests. Moreover, she feels that some of her teachers do not address the negative social dynamics in the classroom, which make her feel sad and frustrated. Because she gets picked on by the other kids, she often chooses to not participate so she does not call more attention to herself.

How can we help students like Tara who are emotionally disengaged? One reason why students are disen-

gaged is that they do not see the content they are learning as personally relevant or meaningful to their lives (Fredricks, Hofkens, Wang, Mortenson, & Scott, 2018). In many classrooms, teachers control and structure students' learning experiences through a reliance on direct instructional methods such as lecturing and seatwork (Marchand-Martella, Slocum, & Martella, 2004). Prior research has shown that students report lower engagement and higher rates of boredom during teacher-directed activities, and higher rates of engagement when they feel optimally challenged, perceive that the instruction is relevant, and feel that the learning environment was under their control (Larson & Richards, 1991; Shernoff, Csikzentmihalyi, Schneider, & Shernoff, 2003).

Traditionally, schools have emphasized the development of academic competencies and have focused less attention on supporting students' social and emotional needs. One way to increase students like Tara's connection to school is to integrate social and emotional learning programs in school. These programs build children's skills to recognize and manage emotions and handle interpersonal situations more effectively (Greenberg et al., 2003). Research suggests that these programs can promote positive mental health and lead to more positive attitudes toward school, higher behavioral engagement, fewer conduct problems, positive social behaviors, and higher achievement (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011).

Creating a welcoming classroom and school community can also help students like Tara to feel emotionally connected to other students. Research has linked students' sense of community to positive attitudes toward school, greater school engagement, and higher achievement (Osterman, 2000). Teachers can play a key role in creating a sense of community and identifying and supporting those students who are at risk for developing poor relationships with their peers (Fredricks, 2014; Furrer et al., 2014). Teachers can support the development of community by providing meaningful opportunities for collaboration and positive social interactions, by emphasizing prosocial values, by using discussion to elicit students' perspectives, by listening to and respecting students, and by seeking out additional supports from school psychologists and social workers for students who are having difficulty with social interactions (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Fredricks, 2014).

Cognitively and Emotionally Disengaged

Another profile is students who are behaviorally engaged but are showing signs of cognitive and emotional disengagement. Students who fit this profile describe their engagement in school as "doing school," "doing the bare minimum," "mindlessly taking notes," "robo-student," and "going through the motion" (Fredricks et al., 2016;

Jimenez-Alexandre, Rodriguez, & Duschl, 2000; Pope, 2001). For students who fit this profile, it is often difficult to distinguish between engagement and disengagement. To an outside observer, they look engaged. These students participate and are usually doing well in school but are often bored, multitasking, and are not deeply invested in learning (Pope, 2001). Although these students do complete their work, their engagement is often superficial. These students tend to use more shallow learning strategies and focus more on memorizing material and finding the right answer, as opposed to using deep learning strategies that help them to understand and make meaning of the material. Students who fit this profile do what they need to do to complete the task or get a good grade but concede that they often do not actually learn or retain the material (Fredricks et al., 2016; Pope, 2001).

This profile is very common in high-performing districts and is associated with less favorable academic and mental health outcomes. In a study of students attending 15 high achieving schools, Connor and Pope (2013) found that over two-thirds of students showed this type of profile. These students reported higher levels of cheating, poorer mental health, and greater stress than fully engaged students (i.e., high on behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement). Moreover, the use of shallow and superficial strategies is associated with less favorable outcomes. Prior research has shown that the use of deep learning strategies, such as relating new information to existing information and actively monitoring comprehension, leads to higher achievement than the use of shallow and surface strategies such as memorization and rote processing (Greene, Miller, Crowson, Duke, & Akey, 2004).

Dylan is an 11th grade Black female who is an example of student with high behavioral engagement, but low emotional and cognitive engagement. Dylan gets mostly As in school and is motivated by getting good grades. She completes her work but is ambivalent toward school and does not like to be challenged. Dylan's engagement is higher when she likes and understands the material. However, she can get upset easily when her performance does not match her expectations. She felt she was more engaged in middle school because it was more fun, but now feels less engaged because it is boring and a lot more work. She gets frustrated easily and gives up, especially when the material is hard. When she likes her teacher, she is more likely to participate. However, Dylan does not like the strict disciplinary culture of her school and thinks that many of her teachers are annoying. She is more engaged when she gets to move around and do hands-on activities, which are more typical of her elec-

fives than her academic classes.

How can we get students like Dylan to be more emotionally and cognitively engaged? One way is to increase the use of student-centered instructional approaches, a form of teaching that shifts the focus from the teacher to the student by giving students' greater voice and asking them to take greater responsibility for their learning (McCombs & Miller, 2006). In more student-centered instructional environments, students work together on open-ended problems that tend to have greater applicability to learning outside of the classroom. Research suggests that the engagement is higher in student-centered instructional environments because students are working on relevant tasks (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Fredricks, Hofkens, Wang, Mortenson, & Scott, 2018; Meece, 2003), have the opportunity to work with and to discuss ideas with their peers (O'Donnell & Hmelo-Silver, 2013; Ryan & Patrick, 2001), and have greater voice in both the content and form of the learning (Reeve, 2013).

One challenge with students like Dylan is that they may show some resistance to more open-ended tasks where there are multiple correct answers and the outcomes are less predictable, which can be unsettling for a student who is so focused on getting the right answer (Fredricks, 2014). These students often become so focused on the performance that they become afraid to take on intellectual risks because they fear failure and do not want to look less competent than their peers (Elliot & Church, 1997). For these students, we need to deemphasize the consequences of taking risks. Teachers also need to model and reward taking risks so that students can see that making errors are a natural part of the learning process.

The achievement goal structure of the school also sends important messages to students about learning and ability. Teachers should endorse mastery goals which emphasize learning and individual improvement as the main goals of learning, as opposed to performance goals which emphasize getting the right answer and define relative performance as the main goals of learning (Anderman & Midgley, 1997). Teachers can create a more mastery-oriented environment by emphasizing interest and the value of learning, by focusing attention on students' effort and strategy use, and by deemphasizing social comparison and grades (Linnebrink & Fredricks, 2008).

Finally, teachers can increase emotional and cognitive engagement by minimizing external evaluation pressures and increasing students' opportunities for voice and choice (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). In autonomy-supportive environments, teachers give students opportunities to work in their own way, acknowledge and are responsive to students' questions and comments, praise signs of improvement and mastery, and provide rationale for the value of an activity (Fredricks, 2014). In contrast, in controlling environments, teachers ask students to

adhere to their agendas by offering extrinsic incentives, making external evaluations salient, and using controlling language as a way of directing student work (Reeve & Jang, 2006).

CONCLUSION

To date, many interventions have been developed based on a one-size-fits-all approach which assumes that the average effects apply equally to all participants (Wang & Degol, 2014). Findings from person-centered studies suggest that this assumption is not valid and instead we need to design interventions that are tailored to the needs of specific subgroups. Another benefit of person-centered analytic techniques is that researchers can also identify profiles of youth that have not typically been identified as at risk by practitioners. One example is the tendency to focus on behavioral indicator of risk. As a result, practitioners may miss youth who are showing signs of emotional and cognitive disengagement.

Identifying different profiles of disengaged students also has important implications for practice. Using a profile approach can help educators and support personnel to think more comprehensively about the reasons why different students are disengaged and design appropriate interventions to meet the needs of that particular group. For example, one would intervene differently with a student who is emotionally disengaged but higher on behavioral and cognitive engagement than a student whose disengagement is primarily behavioral. An emotionally disengaged student would benefit from a greater attention to building community, strengthening peer relations, and addressing mental health and socio-emotional needs. In contrast, a behaviorally disengaged student likely will benefit more from interventions around behavioral support, discipline, and classroom management.

In sum, we encourage the continued use of both qualitative and person-centered techniques to provide a richer description of the different subgroups of engaged and disengaged students. This research can provide an important insight into differences in both the reasons why these students are disengaged and consequences of disengagement across these subgroups. Finally, this information can be used in more effectively designing tailored

interventions that can address the unique needs of these different groups of students.

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Further Reading

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Peers and Engagement

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Student engagement is important to learning in school (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012; Fredricks, 2015). Student engagement in school is associated with higher standardized test scores and grades, better social–emotional well-being, and lower rates of dropout (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Wang & Fredricks, 2014; Wang & Holcombe, 2010). Given its importance to well-being and achievement, much research has sought to understand the factors that contribute to engagement for youth. Engagement is conceptualized as malleable and sensitive to features of the context that youth experience (Fredricks, Filsecker, & Lawson, 2016). For example, research has shown that teachers' instruction, emotional support, and behavior management affect student engagement (Fredricks, 2011). Peers are an important part of the social context of youth, both in and out of school. There is increasing evidence that peer relationships matter for engagement (Ryan & Ladd, 2012; Wentzel & Ramani, 2016). The goal of our chapter is to consider how peers matter for students' engagement.

Engagement is an appealing construct because of its broad and integrative nature. It is easily understood and highly applicable for practitioners who work with youth (Fredricks et al., 2004, 2016). Fredricks et al. (2016) call it a “metaconstruct” that includes observable behaviors, internal cognitions, and emotions. The predominant conceptualization used by most scholars postulates three distinct, but related, dimensions of engagement: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive (Fredricks et al., 2004). We will use this conceptualization to organize our review. Behavioral engagement refers to participation, effort, attention, persistence, positive conduct, and refraining from disruptive behavior. Emotional engagement refers to positive affects such as enjoyment and interest and the lack of negative affects such as anger, frustration, or boredom. Cognitive engagement refers to deep learning strategies, self-regulation, and critical analysis that occur when an individual is highly focused and deeply immersed in learning or mastery of an activity. In this chapter, we include

research that falls in the realm of our definitions of behavioral, emotional, or cognitive engagement, regardless of what the authors of any particular study call their construct. For example, there is work on peer relationships and students' intrinsic value for schoolwork. Intrinsic value refers to enjoyment or interest in a subject or task, so we would include this in our category of emotional engagement. At times, we also include work on peers and achievement. Although achievement is distinct from engagement, research on achievement is informative and relevant, especially for aspects of peer relationships and engagement for which there is little existing research.

Regarding peers, we discuss three predominant perspectives of the roles that peers play in young people's lives: socialization (peers are socializing agents), social support (peers provide emotional and social support), and social status (peers provide a context where a social status hierarchy is established). For each perspective, we discuss current conceptual frameworks and relevant theory for how and why peers matter for engagement and review empirical evidence linking that aspect of peer relationships to engagement. We also consider how bullying and victimization can impact student engagement. We then turn our attention to how educators and practitioners who work with youth can promote positive peer relationships to support student engagement. First, we review social-emotional learning (SEL) programs. Second, we discuss the importance of building emotionally supportive relationships and contexts and how adults can do so. Before concluding this chapter, we discuss important directions for future research on peer relations and engagement.

Socialization

Peers affect student adjustment by providing a context where beliefs and behaviors are socialized (Altermatt & Pomerantz, 2003; Kindermann, 2007; Ryan, 2000). Peers provide youth with suggestions and options of ways to think about and to behave in the world, and their reactions and evaluations serve to affirm, sustain, or change an individual's beliefs and behaviors. Social cognitive theory provides a theoretical framework for understanding how peers influence beliefs and behavior. As put forward by Bandura, social cognitive theory examined how youth acquire knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, behaviors, and even emotions through their social interactions with and observations of others. Students' functioning is explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocity in which behavior, cognitions, and environmental events interact with each other (Bandura, 1986, 2001). Peers are an important part of the social environment for youth.

Socialization is the process by which individuals acquire knowledge and conform to the norms and values of their peers, particularly friends with whom they spend much of their time (Kindermann & Gest, 2009; Ryan, 2000). The characteristics of one's friends contribute to changes in an individual person over time. Spending time with friends who are highly engaged can promote engagement, whereas spending time with friends who are disengaged can dampen engagement over time (Shin & Ryan, 2014a). Mechanisms thought to underlie this type of peer influence include information exchange, modeling, and reinforcement, and these processes can play out with one best friend, a few friends, or a larger group. Information exchange refers to how social interactions in which friends share ideas or knowledge can lead to changes in student beliefs or behaviors. Modeling processes are less direct and refer to changes in cognition, behavior, or affect that result from the observation of others. Observing peers perform a particular behavior or voice a certain belief can introduce a student to new behaviors and viewpoints and also inform a student of the consequences of such behaviors and opinions. Depending on the consequences, observation of a peer can strengthen or weaken the likelihood that the student will engage in such behavior or adopt such beliefs in the future (Bandura, 1986; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997). Social reinforcement is presumed to play a role in this process (Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). Beliefs and behaviors that are discouraged or received negatively by friends are less likely to be displayed again by an individual. Conversely, beliefs and behaviors that are encouraged or positively received by the friends are more likely to surface again in the presence of one's friends.

Much of the research investigating how peers socialize beliefs and behaviors has examined students' friendship networks at school.¹ With surveys, researchers collect information about students' friendships as well as their beliefs and behaviors, including aspects of engagement. A central finding is that friends at school tend to be similar on a variety of characteristics (e.g., gender and race as well as grades, internalizing and externalizing behaviors; [Veenstra & Steglich, 2012](#)). There is evidence for similarity among friends for behavioral engagement. Specifically, friends have been found to be similar in effortful behavior toward their schoolwork ([Berndt & Keefe, 1995](#); [Kindermann, 1993](#); [Ryan, 2001](#); [Shin & Ryan, 2014a](#)), disruptive behavior in school ([Shin & Ryan, 2014a](#)), time spent on homework ([Cohen, 1977](#)), and the frequency of cutting classes ([Kandel, 1978](#)). There is also evidence for similarity among friends for emotional engagement. Specifically, friends have been found to be similar in their intrinsic value, interest, and enjoyment in their schoolwork ([Ryan, 2001](#); [Shin & Ryan, 2014a](#)). It also seems that friends are similar in their cognitive engagement. For example, youth are similar to their friends in their preference for challenge ([Altermatt & Pomerantz, 2003](#); [Shin & Ryan, 2014b](#)) as well as report card grades and test scores ([Flashman, 2012](#); [Ide, Parrkerson, Haertel, & Walberg, 1981](#); [Ryan, 2001](#); [Shin & Ryan, 2014a](#)). This phenomenon of similarity among friends is known as homophily.

Homophily is not evidence that friends influence each other. Contributing to homophily is both selection, the extent to which friends with similar characteristics seek one another as affiliates, and influence, the degree to which friends become more alike in attitudes and behavioral tendencies because of their frequent interaction ([Veenstra & Steglich, 2012](#)). Students form friendships with compatible peers, and in turn those friendships create a context that affects their developmental trajectories. Students may select friends who are similar to them in

¹This chapter draws heavily on work in the area of social developmental psychology. In keeping with this perspective, in this section, we focus on socialization processes among youth and their friends. Friends are voluntary relationships that youth form with peers. Socialization processes are also relevant in classroom-based peer relationships that are assigned by the teacher, such as collaborative or ability-based work groups. While socialization in such groups is also relevant for engagement, it is beyond the scope of our chapter to review work on cooperative learning or other classroom-based teacher-assigned groups and how the peer dynamic in such groups affects engagement.

Relatedness and Social Support

Another perspective on why peers matter for engagement is that they are companions who provide a sense of relatedness and social support. When students form an affectionate bond with peers and believe others will help them if it is needed, they are more engaged in the world around them. This perspective focuses on the quality and nature of a student's peer relationships rather than the characteristics of one's peer group or friends. Research and theory on belongingness, self-determination, and social support are relevant for understanding the implications of this aspect of peer relations for engagement (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). First, we discuss broadly how belongingness, relatedness, and social support matter for adjustment and then we examine specific evidence in regard to the three facets of engagement.

Belongingness is theorized as a basic human need that, when unfulfilled, can lead to negative outcomes including disengagement (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Individuals have the drive to form and maintain interpersonal connections with others (McClelland, 1985). The extent to which this need is satisfied and results in a sense of belonging has profound effects on engagement. Belongingness (defined as frequent, nonaversive interactions within an ongoing relational bond) is associated with positive adjustment and when it is lacking, well-being suffers (for a review see Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In contrast to attachment theory, which focuses on the bond with parents or adult caregivers, belongingness is theorized to apply more broadly and thus is highly relevant to conceptualizing the importance of peer relationships for youth engagement.

Self-determination theory also articulates the need for relatedness as a fundamental human need (alongside the needs for autonomy and competence) but is more specific about the implications for engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The central tenet is that when contexts are supportive of individual's needs, it sets the stage for intrinsic motivation and engagement to flourish. A sense of relatedness is a critical ingredient for engagement, and without a sense of relatedness, there is disaffection and disengagement (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). Research from a self-determination theoretical perspective has more often focused on the role of parents and teachers in relation to children's needs and motivation, but there is evidence that peers contribute to a sense of relatedness in school settings and matter for the development of engagement (e.g., Furrer & Skinner, 2003).

Research and theory on social support are also relevant for understanding the role peers play in youth engagement (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support is similar to a sense of relatedness and belonging in that it includes an element of affiliation and connection to others. However, the concept of social support is broader and includes the belief that others will provide help if it is needed. Social support can come from different sources (i.e., parents

and teachers) but social support from peers has been found to be important to students' academic adjustment at school (DuBois, Felner, Brand, Adan, & Evans, 1992; Wang & Eccles, 2012; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010). Peer social support can take the form of emotional or informational support. Regarding emotional support, peers are a source of validation, encouragement, and even safety at school. Regarding informational support, peers can provide valuable information and advice.

Much research has examined the general feelings of belonging or social support that students perceive with their peers at school via surveys (Goodenow, 1993; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996; Wang & Eccles, 2012; Wentzel, 1994). For example, a sample item from a belongingness measure is "Other students in class are friendly to me" (Goodenow, 1993). A sample item from a relatedness measure is "When I'm with my classmates I feel accepted" (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Measures of peer social support encompass elements of both emotional support (e.g., "My peers at school respect and care about me," Song, Bong, Lee, & Kim, 2015) and informational support (e.g., "I can solicit my peers help when performing difficult tasks," Song et al., 2015). Most research has combined different elements of social support from peers into one omnibus peer social support scale (e.g., Song et al., 2015; Wang & Eccles, 2012) or examined overall feelings of relatedness/belongingness with peers (Anderman & Anderman, 1999; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; King, 2015).

Students' feelings of relatedness or belongingness at school have been found to be associated with a wide range of adjustment indicators, including engagement (for reviews, see Becker & Luthar, 2002; Juvonen, 2007; Osterman, 2000). Much of the research has been cross-sectional, making it challenging to ascertain the direction of effects and whether relatedness leads to engagement or engagement leads to relatedness. However, longitudinal studies have shown that students' feelings of relatedness or belongingness predict increases in behavioral engagement (i.e., effortful behavior, see Furrer & Skinner, 2003; King, 2015; Mikami, Ruzek, Hafen, Gregory, & Allen, 2017) and emotional engagement (i.e., affect, see King, 2015) over time. Students' perceptions of peer support at school have been found to predict changes in emotional engagement across the middle school years (i.e., positive affect, see Wang & Eccles, 2012). A longitudinal study across the 4 years of high school found that within-person fluctuations of school belonging mattered for emotional engagement. The years when students had higher school belonging were also the years in which they reported being more emotionally engaged (i.e., enjoying school, Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2012).

Social Status

Among peers, hierarchies develop and students have different positions and reputations, known as their social status. A student's social status has implications for his/her behavioral and emotional engagement. Theory and research on social status have distinguished between different forms of social status (Rodkin & Ryan, 2012). Likeability reflects peer acceptance or social preference by peers. It is typically assessed by peer nominations of youth's liking/disliking their classmates or students in their grade (Cillessen & Rose, 2005). Popularity, in contrast, refers to social dominance, visibility, and prestige among peers, which is typically assessed by youth's nominations of peers whom they perceive to be "popular" or "cool" (Bellmore, Villarreal, & Ho, 2011). Likeability and popularity are moderately correlated but are associated with different patterns of behavior and thus have different implications for engagement.

A large body of research that has examined the behavioral correlates of well-liked youth indicates that they do well in school because they are well connected with their peers, cooperative, and easily communicate with others (Rodkin & Ryan, 2012). Well-liked youth are willing to help others and others are willing to help them. Peers like to work with them and social interactions in the classroom tend to be positive and productive for these students. This suggests that well-liked youth are positively emotionally engaged in school, but research has not specifically examined student reports of emotional engagement in relation to likeability. Most research on likeability and behavioral engagement has been cross-sectional. However, one longitudinal study by Ladd, Herald-Brown, and Reiser (2008) found that children's likeability in kindergarten predicted increases in classroom participation throughout elementary school. Another longitudinal study found that likeability in fourth grade predicted less steep declines in behavioral engagement through sixth grade, above and beyond variation explained by positive teacher-student relationships (De Laet et al., 2015). In the De Laet study, engagement was measured with items that tapped on-task behavior, paying attention in the classroom and homework.

There has not been research examining likeability in relation to cognitive engagement but research on achievement suggests a positive link. In a cross-sectional study, Wentzel and Caldwell (1997) found positive associations between likeability and grades for early adolescent students. The positive association between likeability and

As we have described throughout this chapter, students' peer relationships are important to their engagement. There is growing recognition that teachers and other practitioners who work with youth need to meet social and emotional needs of youth to reach their full potential (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). In this section, we discuss two approaches for how educators and practitioners can support peer relationships of youth. First, we discuss programs that focus on SEL. The implementation of such programs in schools has grown greatly in recent years. Second, we discuss the importance of caring and emotionally supportive relationships and what adults can do to establish emotionally supportive context in which positive relationships between adults and youth as well as among youth flourish.

Social–Emotional Learning Programs

SEL refers to how individuals acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills for managing emotions, setting positive goals, feeling and showing empathy for others, form and maintain relationships, and make responsible decisions (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). Thus SEL facilitates positive socialization, social support, and equitable social status (i.e., fitting in and a welcoming attitude toward all peers). Such skills are viewed as critical for youth to be positively engaged in the world and ultimately good citizens and workers. SEL programs focus on positive youth development by promoting positive outcomes by enhancing social and emotional skills and building assets rather than reducing risk by targeting problems (Brackett & Rivers, 2014).

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a nonprofit group that advocates and disseminates information about high-quality SEL programs. CASEL's website (www.casel.org) provides a guide for the best practices to promote SEL and a review of over 220 different programs. CASEL identifies five core competencies associated with SEL: (1) self-awareness, or the ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior, (2) self-management, or the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations, and to set and work toward personal and academic goals, (3) social awareness, or the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports, (4) relationship skills, or the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and

groups through communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed, and (5) responsible decision-making, or the ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of the consequences that stem from actions, and the well-being of self and others. These core competencies equip students to promote, and benefit from, positive

Emotionally Supportive Relationships and Contexts

An emotionally supportive relationship with teachers and other adults promotes engagement (Roorda, Jak, Zee, Oort, & Koomen, 2017; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). In a given setting (e.g., classroom or after-school program), when youth have emotionally supportive relationships with the adult in charge, they feel safe and comfortable and are more likely to forge positive peer relationships as well (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011). When youth feel socially connected to others, they are more likely to be engaged in activities. Thus to promote engagement, teachers and youth practitioners need to create an emotionally supportive context. An emotionally supportive context is characterized by positive relationships, affect, respect, and communication. Negative affects such as conflict, sarcasm, and disrespect are rare. When adults genuinely know their students, are sensitive to their needs, communicate effectively with their students, and encourage positive relationships among students, they create a caring environment in which positive relationships are more likely to flourish (Brown & Knowles, 2014; Charney, 2002; Pianta & Hamre, 2009).

There are numerous things that teachers and others who work with youth can do to create emotionally supportive contexts (Brown & Knowles, 2014; Charney, 2002; Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, & Sears, 2012; Pianta, Hamre, & Mintz, 2010). Ryan, Urdan, and Anderman (2017) described several types of adult behaviors that facilitate emotionally supportive relationships with youth. First, adults should strive to build relationships with youth by showing an interest in youth with whom they work. Asking questions and sharing some personal information can facilitate relationship building. Before delving into a lesson or activity, adults can spend some time forging personal connections. At the beginning of a program or early in the school years, adults can engage in activities with the goal of everyone getting to know each other better. Second, adults should communicate in a positive manner, including expressing positive expectations, appreciating positive behavior, and showing positive affect. Model the attitude and behavior that you want youth to engage in. Use student names. Encourage students to respond constructively to their peers' ideas and opinions. Intervene quickly if students make disparaging comments to peers. Finally, listen and try to understand youth perspectives. Ask questions. Check on their progress and try to notice any problems. Provide help if it is needed. Be flexible and try to incorporate their ideas when possible. Please see Table 6.1 for a list of some of the adult behaviors that help build personal relationships, support positive communication, and learn about youth perspectives.

TABLE 6.1 Behaviors That Help Create an Emotionally Supportive Relationship and Context.

- *Build personal relationships with youth*
 - Get to know the youth with whom you work by asking questions
 - Share information about yourself
 - Before delving into activities, spend some time forging personal connections
 - Plan some activities that allow youth to get to know their peers, especially early in the year
 - *Communicate in a positive manner*
 - Show appreciation for positive behavior
 - Express positive expectations
 - Encourage respect among youth
 - Use your students' names
 - Show positive affect
 - *Try to understand youth perspectives*
 - Check in with youth and monitor their progress
 - Respond to students when they need help
 - Ask questions to elicit their thinking
 - Try to truly listen to students' perspectives
 - Be flexible and try to incorporate youths' ideas
-

grams and/or creating emotionally supportive contexts and relationships. There has been increased attention in recent years to the role that adults (mostly teachers) play in peer relations (Farmer, Lines, & Hamm, 2011). However, teachers receive little to no training on supporting peer relations, despite increased attention to issues such as bullying and victimization that pose threats to youth engagement. We discussed an important recent effort at professional development in this arena (MTP; Allen et al., 2015). However, further attention to professional development is needed on how to best support teachers or youth practitioners in managing peer relationships. One important issue for the training of teachers is the timing of support, that is, when support for the development of such skills is likely to be most fruitful. Perhaps awareness to managing peer relations should be integrated with the early development of pedagogical skills in preservice teachers, or perhaps it may best be taught through in-service professional development that uses teachers' current practice as a basis for the development of situated knowledge and skill. Given that research on this topic is relatively new, interview or focus group studies with teachers or other adults who work with youth on their knowledge, skills, strategies, and challenges managing peer relations of youth would be informative.

In conclusion, peers matter in a variety of ways for youth engagement. Peers are important socialization agents that contribute to the development of beliefs and behaviors. Peers provide a sense of belonging, relatedness, and social support. Peers provide a context where students sort themselves and take on different roles in the social world at school. Some peers bully and some youth are victimized. Through these various mechanisms, peers affect engagement. However, adults play a role in the peer relationships that develop in classrooms, programs, and activities. Adults can implement SEL programs and create emotionally supportive relationships and contexts to facilitate the development of positive youth peer relations that promote engagement.

We hope this chapter has been helpful for readers to consider how and why peers matter for engagement and what adults can do to support positive peer relationships for youth. We have a few concluding remarks about this chapter and possibilities for future research that could provide additional insights into peers and engagement.

We organized our review around three different perspectives of how peers might matter for engagement (socializing agents, social support, and social status) and showed that within each perspective, there is evidence that peers matter for engagement. Most of the research we summarized has been done on youth in classrooms and schools and engaged in schoolwork. We drew wider implications and discussed peers and engagement more generally as peers interact, and youth are engaged, in and out of school settings. An important direction for future research is to examine the implications of peer relations for engagement in out of school settings such as athletics, music, theater, or camp settings. We know peers matter for beliefs and behavior in such extracurricular pursuits (e.g., [Fredricks et al., 2002](#)). Most extracurricular settings are voluntary with students choosing to be there or having more choices within that setting. Such autonomy might have implications for how youth interact with peers. Specific consideration of peer socialization, social support, and status dynamics in relation to behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in a variety of settings could be informative.

Another interesting area for future research is whether the nature and implications of peer relations for engagement are similar or different across different subject areas. There is much attention in recent years on how to promote engagement specifically in math and science. There may be specific features of peer relations in these subjects that are important to understanding engagement. For example, social comparison may be more salient in math and science where it is easier to compare who has the “right” and “wrong” answers than in writing assignments in English or social studies. Such information about their peers’ abilities may have implications for how students engage with one another. Further attention to gender dynamics in peer interactions in math and science could also be informative. Some interesting questions future work could address are: Are there gender differences in peer socialization processes regarding engagement in math and science? Is social support more important to females’ engagement in math and science? Are males more likely to have high status among peers in math and science and what are the implications for motivation and engagement?

We discussed two possible ways that adults may play a role in youth peer relationships: by enacting SEL pro-

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The Intersection of Student Engagement and Families: A Critical Connection for Achievement and Life Outcomes

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INTRODUCTION

Student engagement is a flourishing area of research and interest among scholars and educators around the world (Reschly & Christenson, 2012). There are several reasons that student engagement has been conceived of as a metaconstruct (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). It is associated with high-school dropout and completion, as well as other important short- (e.g., achievement) and long-term outcomes (e.g., work success) for students across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012). In addition, student engagement, and disengagement in particular, resonates with educators, who frequently characterize their students as disinterested and uninvolved. Furthermore, the engagement construct allows for a richer, more complete and accurate depiction of students' school experiences in which the complex, interrelated aspects of students' emotions, cognitions, and behaviors are recognized rather than considered in isolation. Moreover, student engagement is alterable, or amenable to intervention. One key to understanding amenability to intervention is that engagement is influenced by important contexts: families, schools, peers, and communities (see Fig. 5.1; Appleton, Christenson, Kim, & Reschly, 2006; Reschly & Christenson, 2012). These contexts may either enhance or thwart students' engagement at school and with learning.

There is an extensive and rich literature on how families influence student learning, achievement, and life outcomes. This is not surprising when one considers that 90% of students' time from birth to the age of 18 is spent outside of school (Walberg, 1984). Families are a critical context for development from conception throughout the lifespan; families are also a primary influence on students' engagement with learning. Our focus in this chapter is on the family contextual variables that facilitate student engagement at school and with learning.

For this chapter, we utilized four subtypes of student engagement. Three of the subtypes are common across scholars (Fredricks et al., 2004): behavioral, affective (sometimes also termed emotional or psychological engagement), and cognitive engagement. Our work in dropout prevention led us to separate academic engagement from behavioral engagement so that we could more efficiently link indicators of engagement to intervention. Furthermore, academic engagement, frequently indicated by students' time on-task, is strongly associated with achievement (Gettinger & Walter, 2012) and is commonly collected and examined in classrooms, making it a natural connection for educators. Cognitive engagement is investment in and perceived relevance of education to one's future and self-regulation (Appleton et al., 2006). Affective engagement refers to students' emotional experiences at school, and while learning (Fredricks et al., 2004) we further operationalized affective engagement in terms of belonging or connectedness to others and perceived support for education from peers, teachers, and families (Reschly, Appleton, & Pohl, 2014). Behavioral engagement is represented by attendance, school-related conduct (e.g., office referral, disciplinary incidents), and both class and extracurricular participation

([Fredricks et al., 2004](#)). Academic engagement, in our conceptualization, refers to credits earned and time on-task during academic classes, including lecture, independent seatwork, group activities, etc. ([Reschly et al., 2017](#)).

Context

Family

- Academic and motivational support for learning
- Goals and expectations
- Monitoring/Supervision
- Learning resources in the home

Peers

- Educational expectations
- Shared common school values
- Attendance
- Academic beliefs and efforts
- Aspiration for learning

School

- *School relational climate* (peers, teachers)
- *Instruction and curriculum*
 - *Programming; curricula; quality of instruction
 - *Goal structure (task vs. ability)
 - *Clear and appropriate expectations
- *Support*
 - *Mental health support and service
 - *Academic support
- *Management*
 - *Disciplinary climate
 - *Authority
 - *Opportunities for student participation

Community

- Service learning

Indicators of student engagement

- Belonging and Identification with school
- School connectedness

- Attendance
- Participation (classroom, extracurricular)
- Behavioral incidents

Affective

Behavioral

Cognitive

Academic

- Self-regulation
- Relevance of school to future aspirations
- Value of learning (goal setting)

- Time on task
- Credits earned toward graduation
- Homework completion
- Class grades

Outcomes

Selected proximal learning outcomes

Academic

- Grades (GPA)
- Performance on standardized tests
- Passing Basic Skills Tests

Social

- Social awareness
- Relationship skills with peers and adults
- Responsible decision-making

Emotional

- Self-awareness of feelings
- Emotion regulation
- Conflict resolution skills

Selected distal outcomes

High school graduation

Postsecondary education and/or employment

Productive citizenry

FIGURE 5.1 Model of context, engagement, and student outcomes. Source: From Reschly, A. L., Pohl, A., Christenson, S. L., & Appleton, J. J. (2017). *Engaging adolescents in secondary schools*. In B. Schultz, J. Harrison, & S. Evans (Eds.), *School mental health services for adolescents*. New York: Oxford University Press (Reschly, Pohl, Christenson, & Appleton, 2017).

UNDERSTANDING FAMILY INFLUENCE

Dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of studies demonstrate a significant relationship between families and achievement ([Christenson, Rounds, & Gorney, 1992](#); [Fan & Chen, 2001](#); [Henderson & Mapp, 2002](#); [Hill & Tyson, 2009](#); [Jeynes, 2005, 2007](#); [Nye, Turner, & Schwartz, 2006](#); [Wilder, 2014](#)). However, much of the discussion of families and academic achievement addresses demographic characteristics of families and students, such as race–ethnicity, proficiency with English, recency of immigration to the United States, and socioeconomic status (SES). These variables are associated with student achievement across grade levels ([McFarland et al., 2017](#); [Musu-Gillette et al., 2017](#)) and important educational outcomes through high school (i.e., dropout, completion) and college (e.g., enrollment, persistence, and completion; [McFarland et al., 2017](#); [Musu-Gillette et al., 2017](#)). However, demographic variables tell us little about the processes or mechanisms through which families influence students' school behavior, achievement, and life outcomes ([Brown & Steinberg, 1991](#); [Dornbusch & Ritter, 1992](#)) and, perhaps even more importantly, provide little, if any, relevant information for intervention. A useful distinction, then, is between what are termed status variables (i.e., demographic

characteristics) and process variables, or, *who families are* versus *what they do* (Kellaghan et al., 1993; Reschly & Christenson, 2009). Indeed, virtually all parents, regardless of race–ethnicity and SES, are interested in and want to support their child’s education and success in life (Henderson, Johnson, Mapp, & Davies, 2007). Furthermore, process variables (e.g., parenting style, support for learning in the home) account for more variance in achievement than demographics (Kellaghan et al., 1993; White, 1982). There is an extensive and rich literature on family process variables and a variety of developmental and school-related outcomes, including, but not limited to, academic achievement.

It is not surprising, of course, that given the connection between families and student outcomes, educational policy and legislation (e.g., No Child Left Behind, Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, National Education Goals) and educators themselves seek to connect with or tap into family involvement to support their goal of educating students. Broadly, family involvement is described as the, “dedication of resources by the parent to the child” (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994, p. 238). However, in this literature, there is variability in how scholars and educators conceptualize family influence and involvement. Some categorizations are more focused on family participation at school (e.g., volunteer, attendance at special events) and the family–teacher relationship, whereas others are focused on the type of support families provide, regardless of setting (Table 5.1). The influence of families on outcomes may function through both direct (e.g., parenting and involvement facilitate academic skills; *skill development*) and indirect mechanisms (involvement affects students’ motivation to do well; *motivational development*; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). What is clear across various conceptualizations is that parenting behavior, support of learning, and aspects of parent–child interactions and relationships are associated with how students behave and learn in school. Although the family context is considered to be critical to student engagement and later outcomes, engagement research tends to focus on school and classroom contexts for engagement. Thus the focus of our chapter is specifically on the family context in terms of what families do to support engagement and learning rather than other aspects of the family–school system (e.g., family inclusion in school decision-making).

The association between family involvement and outcomes includes academics, student engagement, student behavior, and social-emotional well-being (Barton & Coley, 2007; Hess & Holloway, 1984; Wang, Hill, & Hofkens, 2014). Furthermore, these associations generally hold across various racial-ethnic and socioeconomic groups (Jeynes, 2007; Okagaki & Bingham, 2012; Rafferty, Grolnick, & Flamm, 2012; Wilder, 2014). However, the relationship between family involvement and outcomes is more nuanced than it might seem in policy, legislation, or general discussions. Not all types of involvement lead to higher academic achievement or better outcomes (e.g., Epstein & Sheldon, 2006; Jordan et al., 2001). For example, parent participation in a school curriculum night may show support of schooling, as well as endorsement or support of their child's teacher, but it is less likely than a parent-led home reading intervention to improve students' achievement in reading. In this same vein, more involvement does not necessarily indicate better outcomes (Pomerantz et al., 2007). For instance, some studies suggest that high levels of homework assistance (Cooper et al., 2000) and parent contact with the school (Fan, 2001; Izzo et al., 1999) are associated with poorer school performance and disengagement, likely indicating that parents increase their involvement as their child experiences difficulty.

Scholars have noted that type of family involvement and developmental stage may be key considerations for understanding the associations between involvement and outcomes across levels of schooling (Hill, 2015; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Wang, Hill, & Hofkens, 2014). For preschool children, more active involvement is associated with better development in almost every domain, with the exception of motor development (Marcon, 1999), whereas for older students, results are variable. For example, both positive and negative associations with achievement have been found for parent-child and parent-school communications and parental monitoring of student behavior (Catsambis, 2001). One reasonable conclusion regarding these incongruous results is the need for clearer definitions and operationalizations of family involvement and outcome variables. Another explanation relates to changes in development and contexts as students age. To this end, family involvement decreases across elementary school (Izzo et al., 1999) and from elementary to secondary school (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Moreover, the magnitude of the association between involvement and outcomes declines as students age (e.g., Jeynes, 2005); and yet, family involvement may also buffer the decline frequently observed in students' academic performance and motivation and increased problem behaviors demonstrated by many students following transition to secondary school (Wang et al., 2014). It seems likely that ideal or appropriate family involvement changes with students' growing independence, self-direction, and autonomy needs (e.g., Cauce, Felner, & Primavera, 1982), from more direct management (e.g., homework and project supervision, visits to school for events) to a greater focus on motivational and home support for learning dimensions (e.g., problem-solving, discussing future educational

interests, and messages regarding the value of effort). This type of developmental shift in family involvement is not well accounted for in most theories and conceptualizations which tend to be focused on elementary-age children (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

TABLE 5.1 Selected Categorizations of Family Involvement in Education.

Author	Category	Description
Christenson et al.	Home expectations and attributions	High, realistic expectations are communicated to children and adolescents. Families endorse value of effort
	Discipline orientation	Authoritative (i.e., warmth and structure) discipline and active parental monitoring
	Home-affective environment	Close positive connections among parents and children
	Parent participation	There is an educative home environment for students. Parents support learning both at home and at school
	Structure for learning	Organization and daily routines to support student learning
Epstein	Parenting	Helping families establish supportive home environments
	Communicating	Establishing two-way exchanges about school and children's progress
	Volunteering	Recruiting and organizing parent help at school, home, or other locations
	Enhancing learning at home	Providing information and ideas to families about how to help students with homework and other materials
	Decision-making	Involving parents from diverse backgrounds to participate in and lead school committees
	Collaborating with the community	Identifying and integrating community and school resources
Kohl et al.	Parent involvement at school	Volunteering, attending events, involvement with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)
	Parent involvement at home	Involvement relative to school and learning activities (e.g., homework assistance, reading) that supplement learning at school
	Parent-teacher contact	Amount of direct contact with the teacher (face-to-face, phone, in writing)
	Quality of the parent-teacher relationship	Extent of shared goals and openness with one another

Hill	Teacher perception of the parent's value of education	Teachers do not view children and families in their homes. Teachers' estimation of family investment in education
	Parent endorsement of the school	Family endorsement of the school and schooling in general
	School-based involvement	Activities such as assisting teachers in their classrooms (e.g., setting up), fundraising, or volunteering for office or committee work
	Home-based involvement	Structure and materials in the home, monitoring and checking homework
	Academic socialization	Parents' communication of (1) expectations for achievement and value of education (2) learning strategiesPreparations and plans for the future and linking this with students' interests
Pomerantz et al.	Skill development	Skill-related resources parents provide that support student achievement (e.g., receptive language, metacognitive skills)
	Motivational development	Motivational resources parents provide (e.g., supporting intrinsic motivation, perceived control over performance) that support student achievement

FAMILIES, STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, AND OUTCOMES

Many studies have examined the associations between parent behavior and support (e.g., discipline, supervision, quality of parent–child relationship, and school-based involvement) and student achievement or other

outcomes, they but do not report the effects of family involvement on student engagement per se or how different types of involvement may have differential associations with aspects of student engagement or motivation (Fan & Williams, 2010; Gonzelz-DeHass et al., 2005). To this end, it is worth noting that student engagement is a relatively new construct. Furthermore, as a metaconstruct that brings together separate domains of research, many studies may now be viewed through the lens of student engagement, although the authors may not have referred to their measures and results that way (e.g., self-regulation, connectedness with teachers and peers, future goals). Where possible, we have described results in terms of student engagement and motivational constructs. Although there is scholarly debate about the relationship between motivation and engagement (e.g., separate but interdependent constructs? Motivation precedes engagement? Does the engagement metaconstruct subsume motivation, mostly likely as a form of cognitive engagement?), it can be argued that both are necessary for student success (Reschly & Christenson, 2012).

Models of engagement typically conceptualize it as the link between contexts and both proximal (e.g., achievement) and distal (e.g., graduation, college attendance) outcomes (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reschly & Christenson, 2012). Fig. 5.1 provides a representation of the associations among context, student engagement, and outcomes. The contexts in this model include families, school, peers, and community. Contexts are thought to primarily affect student outcomes in the short- and long-term through their effect on students' engagement, which in turn, is directly related to outcomes of interest. These contexts may enhance or impede students' engagement overtime. As such, families vary across dimensions of involvement, autonomy support, and structure, which in turn, affect student motivation and engagement (Raferty et al., 2012). There are at least two ways in which families influence engagement and motivation (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012). One is through the strong associations between parent-child relationships and well-being, making parental involvement a protective factor for disengagement from school. The other is the direct influence of high-quality parent-child relationships on student performance. However, individual responsibility (Reschly & Christenson, 2009) and the person-environment fit (Reschly & Christenson, 2012) are also key considerations. Indeed, motivation and engagement are rooted in the interface of students and contexts (National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, 2004).