Adult Engagement Inventory

A companion to the Adult Agency Cycle

Beloved Community's Adult Engagement Inventory is modeled after the New Orleans Youth Alliance Authentic Youth Engagement Checklist and is a companion tool for the Adult Agency Cycle presented during our Beloved Community session on Belonging. The inventory is an adaptation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Instead of a pyramid, ending at self-actualization which uplifts notions of individualism, the cycle seeks to prove that organizations who invest in the health of their employees will see employees with agency prepared to reinvest their creativity, capacity, and care into the organization. The inventory came out of the need for concrete "look fors" for adult belonging and is meant to be internal facing (i.e. the consistent use of the language "adults in the building") although this document can be adapted for external use. "Adults in the building" include certificated staff, paraprofessionals, support staff, administrators, board members, facilities staff, student teachers, and contractors.

The inventory is structured to match the five components of the cycle (see below) and the purpose is to use the inventory as a mini audit to check for adult belonging at every level. Beloved clients used the inventory as an individual, team, departmental and organizational self-assessment. At Beloved, we believe that evidence (data tracking) is important to understanding the culture of our organizations and ensuring what we feel to be true is accurate. As always, our Beloved community materials are created in reference to Tema Okun's White Supremacy Culture document, and in particular, this document includes direct references to CASEL's social emotional learning competencies and GALLUP's Q12 Index.

Definitions
Belonging: Feeling like an important member of a group.
Othering: To view or treat someone as intrinsically different from and alien to oneself.
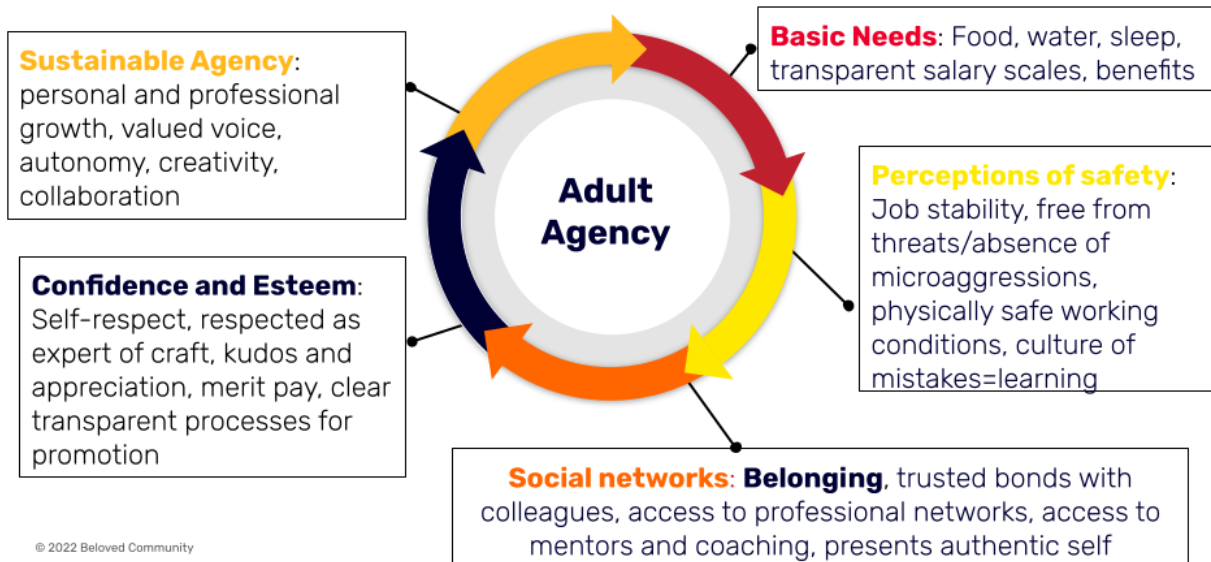
On Belonging
It is important to note that Belonging is what allows the folks in the building to feel like they can be their authentic selves without fear of different treatment or retribution—and it has a major impact on an organization's financial bottom line in terms of performance and retention. Think about the ways the organization you're in

may send the implicit message that some behaviors or ways of being are rewarded and others are unwelcomed. Most organizations have normalized direct action against blatant forms of bias, but there are others that are more insidious and take time to decode (e.g. Code switching, wearing one's hair a certain way, fear of critical feedback due to a culture of false harmony).

It is also important to think about what our own biases are and the implicit messages that we may be sending to employees or colleagues - who gets warmth, who gets supported, and who gets the cold shoulder? Whose display of authenticity makes YOU uncomfortable and why? Self reflection is foundational to creating belonging. Our hope is this inventory helps with that personal reflection and answers the organizational question: *Are people asked to sacrifice pieces of themselves to feel a sense of belonging at this organization?*

ADULT AGENCY CYCLE

Sustainable Agency: personal and professional growth, valued voice, autonomy, creativity, collaboration

Basic Needs: Food, water, sleep, transparent salary scales, benefits

Perceptions of safety: Job stability, free from threats/absence of microaggressions, physically safe working conditions, culture of mistakes=learning

Confidence and Esteem: Self-respect, respected as expert of craft, kudos and appreciation, merit pay, clear transparent processes for promotion

Social networks: Belonging, trusted bonds with colleagues, access to professional networks, access to mentors and coaching, presents authentic self

Adult Agency

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Basic Needs

Basic needs encompass what employees need at baseline. Here we include salary scales and benefits because they are closely tied to an adult's ability to provide basic needs for themselves and/or their families. Simple things like transparent salary scales can mitigate the underlying intense emotional charge that can occur when people are unclear on how they can access fair financial resources.

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Adults in the building use their sick and vacation time		
Adults in the building are not chronically absent		
Adults in the building are equitably compensated		
Adults in the building set realistic goals for themselves		
Adults in the building self-report that benefits meet their unique needs		
Adults in the building know what is expected of them at work.		
Adults in the building have the materials and equipment to complete their work.		

Perceptions of Safety

Perceptions of safety refers to the psychological, emotional and physical safety of employees. The notion of "safety" actively challenges perfectionism or the thought that one has to perform perfectly in order to have value or be safe in their job.

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Adults in the building use inclusive language in person and in print (e.g. gender neutral, anti-ableist, free from microaggressions)		

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Adults know how to report a grievance with the organization or staff member		
Adults in the building self-report feeling physically and cognitively safe		
Adults in the building can receive critical feedback without fear		
Adults in the building reject perfectionism		
Adults in the building ask for help		

Social Networks

Social networks refer to how an organization is actively investing in an employee's growth and future separate from what they can produce. This category allows us to actively challenge our perceptions of professionalism and who is "qualified" for specific treatment (e.g. mentorship, promotions, etc.).

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Relationships between adults in the building are respectful and caring		
Adults in the building confide in one another		
Adults in the building have difficult conversations about DEI topics with one another		
Adults in the building have access to		

mentorships, coaching, and/or affinity spaces as networks		
Adults in the building self-report that they feel trusted and trust their coworkers and supervisors		
Adults in the building engage in healthy conflict		
Adults in the building are comfortable sharing their identities with one another		
Adults in the building regularly practice gratitude and celebrate others		
Adults in the building participate in rituals like circle and restorative practices		

Confidence and Esteem

Confidence and esteem refers to how employees are seen and encouraged to grow as experts of their craft. The indicators in this category challenge paternalism, the notion that named leaders or people with positional power know "better" or the "right thing". Employees in this category are more comfortable and confident using their voice to enact change.

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Adults in the building self-report being able to show up as their "authentic selves"		

Adults in the building are treated as experts in their craft		
Adults in the building receive praise		
Adults in the building know how to receive merit pay, bonuses or stipend pay, and/or promotions dependent upon their role		
Adults in the building advocate for themselves		
Adults in the building name their personal areas of growth without fear		
Adults in the building are consulted for decision making		
Adults in the building feel comfortable providing supervisors with feedback		
Adults in the building have opportunities to learn and grow by directing their own professional development		

Sustainable Agency

Sustainable agency challenges the notions of individualism. Employees in this category have reached a level of belonging that allows them to lean into collectivism. Employees with sustainable agency feel that they are comfortable, respected, valued, and empowered, and have developed past competition to cooperation. They are capable of leading with inquiry and are attuned to needs outside of their own which helps them advocate for others.

Indicators	Yes/No	Evidence
Adults in the building take risks in their roles		
Adults in the building advocate for equity at all levels and for others		
Adults in the building feel confident pursuing passion projects		
Adults in the building lead equity work (e.g. in professional development, grade level team meetings, board meetings)		
Adults in the building contribute to an inclusive work environment		
Adults in the building report alignment between the organization's mission/purpose and their own personal core values.		

Child Agency Development Inventory
A companion to the Child/Student Agency Cycle

The Child Engagement Inventory, modeled after the [New Orleans Youth Alliance (NOYA) Authentic Youth Engagement Checklist](#) (NOYA, 2020) and Trauma-Informed Schools Policy, Procedure & Practice Checklist (New Orleans Trauma-Informed Schools Learning Collaborative, 2017) is a companion tool for the Child/Student Agency Cycle presented during our Beloved Community session about Belonging. The inventory came out of the need for concrete "look fors" for child belonging and is meant to be an internal facing self assessment although this document can be adapted for external use for observers. Similar to the Trauma-Informed Schools Policy, Procedure & Practice Checklist (2017) this Inventory is created to elicit discussion that should center on:
- Strengths and areas for growth within adult behaviors, policies, protocols, and documents
- Points of convergence and divergence from school values and mission.
- Barriers that contribute to the maintenance of growth areas.
- Brainstorming possible actions to address identified growth areas

The inventory is structured to match the five components of the cycle (see appendix), the purpose is to use the inventory as a mini audit to check for child belonging at every level- from physical environment to policy and practices. At Beloved, we believe that evidence (data tracking) is important to understanding the culture of our organizations and ensuring what we feel to be true is accurate. We also believe that policies must exist to sustain inclusion and belonging so that they can outlive any charismatic leader or individual teacher and to ensure a consistent experience across all classrooms and programs. As always, our Beloved community materials are created in reference to Tema Okun's [White Supremacy Culture document](#). This document draws on and synthesizes information from multiple sources and direct references from: NOYA's Authentic Youth Engagement Checklist (2020), The Trauma-Sensitive School Checklist (Lesley University and Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2012), Safe Schools NOLA Policy Checklist (2012), CASEL's social emotional learning competencies and GALLUP's Q12 Index.

Definitions
Belonging: Feeling like an important member of a group.
Othering: To view or treat someone as intrinsically different from and alien to oneself.

Basic Needs

Indicators	Is there evidence of this practice? Yes/No	Is there a policy that supports this practice?[1] Yes/No	Evidence or supporting policy
Children have physical activity at multiple time points in the day			
Physical Activity is available to all (never used as a punishment or reinforcer of behavior)			
All children have access to clean water and food			
Access to water and food are never used as a punisher or reinforcer of behavior.			
Children self-report that they have adequate physical activity			

[1] Areas for indicators that may not need a supporting policy are blacked out

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throughout the day			
Children seek close proximity with their main teachers.			
Children look to adults for help/support			
Children self-report that they can get help when they need it			
Children self-report that they trust adults in the building			
Children demonstrate secure attachment with adults			
All activities and policies are intentionally structured for the child's developmental range.			
All activities and policies are assessed for developmental appropriateness			

Professional Development on child development is provided to all staff			
Professional Development on "parent/caregiver communication" is provided to all staff			

Perceptions of Safety

Indicators	Is there evidence of this practice? Yes/No	Is there a policy that supports this practice? Yes/No	Evidence or supporting policy
There are clear and consistent routines and rituals			
Changes in environment, schedule, or staff are clearly communicated to children before they occur			
Adults in the building model inclusive language in person and in print (e.g. gender neutral, anti-ableist, free from microaggressions)			
Student groups use inclusive language in person			

and in print (e.g. gender neutral, anti-ableist, free from microaggressions)			
Discipline policies and behavioral expectations account for diversity among students (e.g., colloquialisms, language, dialect, etc.)			
Discipline policies and behavioral expectations avoid disproportionately impacting students on the basis of race/ethnicity, language proficiency, disability, gender preference and sexual orientation.			
Discipline policies and behavioral expectations can be easily understood by a variety of audiences (children, parents, administration, etc.)			
Discipline policies and behavioral expectations are culturally and developmentally appropriate			
All children self-report feeling physically and cognitively safe			
All staff engage in antiracist Professional Development that include recognizing biases and microaggressions			

Adults in the building reject perfectionism (consistenlty endorse growth mindset)			
Appropriate staff (e.g. teachers) all receive professional development on culturally relevant curriculum			
All activities are assessed for cultural relevance			
All children report that they feel safe to make mistakes			
A comprehensive assessment of school climate and belonging is conducted at minimum once a year			
Staff receive training on positive behavior strategies and tools			
A clearly written protocol exists for children to anonymously report concerns about the organization or staff members.			
There is clear, written policies concerning bullying protocols			
There is clear data that shows bullying policies are consistently followed			
All discipline/behavior policies include social and emotional learning			

A clearly written protocol exists that outlines a collaborative approach between organization, children, and families in making discipline and behavior related decisions			
Children report that they know how to report a grievance with the organization or staff member			
You have data that shows that children are giving feedback.			
There is visual representation (books, posters, artwork) of a variety of family structures, races, ethnicities, abilities, ages, and gender expressions			
There are designated spaces for children to go when they feel overwhelmed or need to calm.			

Social Networks

Indicators	Is there evidence of this practice? Yes/No	Is there a policy that supports this practice? Yes/No	Evidence or supporting policy
Children report relationships between children and adults in the building are respectful and caring			
Children report good peer relationships			
Children and families have access to culturally relevant celebrations throughout the year			
Children report that they have at least one adult that knows them best.			
Children report that they have adequate social time with peers			
Children are celebrated for social/emotional/behavioral attributes (i.e. kindness, helpfulness)			
Children report that they are comfortable sharing their identities at school			
Children report that they trust the adults in the building			

Children regularly practice gratitude and celebrate others			
Children participate in rituals like circle and restorative practices			

Confidence and Esteem

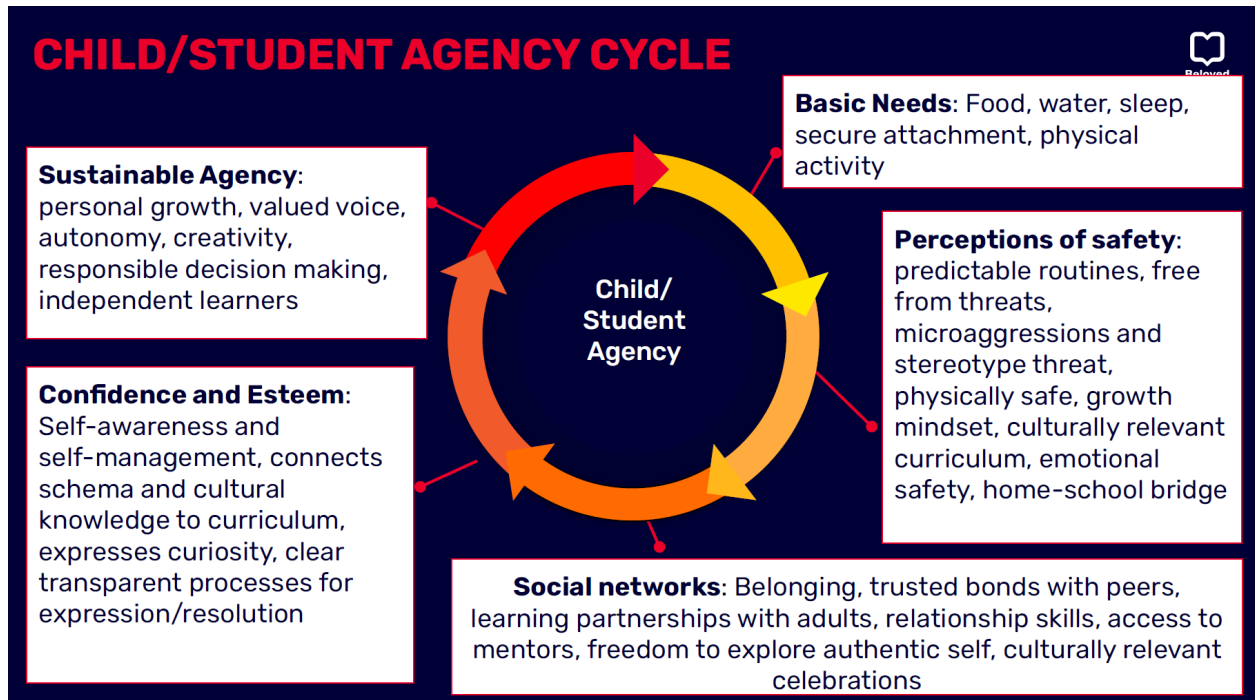| Indicators	Is there evidence of this practice? Yes/No	Is there a policy that supports this practice? Yes/No	Evidence or supporting policy
Children report that they are encouraged to take risks with their learning.			
Children report that they can see themselves in the curriculum			
Children report that curiosity is valued			
Children report that they are encouraged to advocate for themselves and others			
Children in the building advocate for themselves			
Children in the building are comfortable receiving feedback from peers			

Child and caregiver feedback is part of adult performance metrics			
Student data (academic, discipline, etc.) is shared and discussed with students on a regular basis.			
Children have opportunities for input on curriculum, rules, consequences, and interventions, programs			
Children have input on the physical environment			
There are standard practices for peer to peer learning			
There are standard practices for fostering and identifying child peer role models and leaders			

Sustainable Agency

Indicators	Is there evidence of this practice? Yes/No	Is there a policy that supports this practice? Yes/No	Evidence or supporting policy

Children report that adults in the building care about their personal growth			
Children have an active voice in their education and program development			
Decision making skills are fostered in children			
Children are active contributors to their environment			
Children exhibit internalized growth mindsets (encourage others to take risks, exhibit flexible thinking when mistakes are made, are able to restore after conflict)			
Children are encouraged to problem solve in creative ways			

Appendix

CHILD/STUDENT AGENCY CYCLE

Basic Needs: Food, water, sleep, secure attachment, physical activity

Sustainable Agency: personal growth, valued voice, autonomy, creativity, responsible decision making, independent learners

Perceptions of safety: predictable routines, free from threats, microaggressions and stereotype threat, physically safe, growth mindset, culturally relevant curriculum, emotional safety, home-school bridge

Child/ Student Agency

Confidence and Esteem: Self-awareness and self-management, connects schema and cultural knowledge to curriculum, expresses curiosity, clear transparent processes for expression/resolution

Social networks: Belonging, trusted bonds with peers, learning partnerships with adults, relationship skills, access to mentors, freedom to explore authentic self, culturally relevant celebrations

References

New Orleans Youth Alliance (2020). *Authentic Youth Engagement Checklist.* New Orleans, LA: Author.
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The Trauma-Sensitive School Checklist (2012). Lesley University and Massachusetts Advocates for Children

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