



Relationships for Growth & Learning

~ supporting all young children and the adults who surround them ~

Relationships for Growth & Learning (RfGL) weaves a safety net of individualized, developmental, relationship- and strength-centered services in (pre)schools to support diagnosable, at-risk children, their families and their teachers, so that all children are ready to flourish in school.

The Challenge

With more than a third of U.S. children entering kindergarten unready to learn, waiting to address problems that are already evident when a child is 2-5 years old misses a critical time in which to improve a child's life possibilities and those of their families. After losing a year of social emotional education due to the pandemic, our early learners are now at even higher risk. It is a widely accepted fact in the early childhood field that children's social-emotional lives are profoundly influenced by their early relationships and experiences. One early childhood relationship that has been significantly impacted by over a year of isolation has been that of peer relations. **Research has demonstrated, that under certain circumstances, peer relationships hold pivotal potential for remarkable growth.**^{1,2}

U.S. Data

- ▶ **35%** of children reach kindergarten with struggles that interfere with learning.³
- ▶ **1-2%** of young children are identified and receive effective support to help them prosper.^{4,5}
- ▶ **20%** of children under age 5 have a mental health diagnosis.^{7,8}
- ▶ **0.7%** of preschool children are expelled from preschool due to behavioral problems each year.⁶
- ▶ **68%** of caregivers report a significant increase in stress Post-Pandemic.⁹
- ▶ **63%** of caregivers have lost emotional supports Post-Pandemic.⁹
- ▶ **78%** of Caregivers report that their child is exhibiting behavioral problems.¹⁰

Relationships for Growth & Learning (RfGL)

provides an irresistible medium for accelerating growth:

- ▶ Teams of teachers and mental health consultants identify children, ages 2 to 6, who are not learning, playing and growing in their (pre)school classrooms.
- ▶ Peer play psychotherapy, playgroups of children with challenges, are guided by an RfGL-trained therapist to motivate learning and development among and within each group's members.
- ▶ All children improve, with many catching up to their peers¹ -- though still young and vulnerable, they enter classrooms ready to learn and socialize warmly with both peers and teachers.

45+ years

Started in 1968, RfGL is supported by decades of university-based research and more than 45 years of continuous clinical and training experience in New York, Central Florida, Chicago's South Side and St. Paul.



Creating Compassionate Environments for All

Because relationships are central to social-emotional development and health, RfGL cultivates the self-regulated foundation needed to nurture a vibrant, strong, knowledgeable, relationship-based, self-compassionate support system for children, their parental caregivers, as well as, of course, for the teachers and staff at all levels who work hard to serve them.

As director, ... I know how valuable [RfGL] is for children, parents and staff ... Children's challenging behaviors improve ... teachers experience less stress in the classroom, so staff morale improves. The ripple effect results in less staff turnover, which equals more experienced staff."

- Head Start Director



Over 90%

of parents from numerous cultural, immigration, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds who have children in need accept in-school RfGL services.

A Proven Track Record

After one or two school-years in RfGL, parent and teacher reports and psychological assessment instruments all agreed that the treated children had made significant, demonstrable progress across social, emotional, communication, self-regulation and play domains.

The children can play, pay attention, learn, and seem happier more often.

*"If we all hold hands,
we can't fight"*

- Fabian, age 6, Brooklyn, NY
RfGL Participant

Partner with Relationship for Growth & Learning (RfGL)

RfGL partners with mental health agencies so they can develop relationships and deliver RfGL services in their local school settings. RfGL uses a Learning Collaborative training model which centers on work in local schools with children, parents and staff members. Reflective consultation to support staff and trainees is an intrinsic part of the two-year Learning Collaborative. Partners are encouraged to consider their senior staff members becoming regional RfGL trainers.

Contact Us!

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