GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

DESIGN TEAM PRODUCTS: GLOSSARY

PURPOSE:

The design team members hope that a diverse range of practitioners that work with adolescents will engage with these products. With that goal in mind, the aim of this glossary is to establish common ground about the terms used across the products.

Agency

The ability to influence and/or produce an intended effect. Adolescence is characterized by an increased desire for agency in deciding how one spends their time, represents themselves, and/or exerts influence on decisions that shape their life

Autonomy

When a learner feels responsible for making decisions that promote their own learning, including making choices about the task, technique, time, and team they use to tackle learning objectives

Cognitive Reappraisal

Process of revisiting initially negative feelings like shame, failure, etc. (e.g. feelings upon receiving a low test grade) in order to reinterpret a situation as an opportunity to learn and grow

Competence

Applied skills and knowledge that enable one to successfully perform in professional, educational, and other life contexts

Executive Function

Higher order mental activities such as decision-making, evaluating, and planning, which are regulated by the prefrontal cortex

Evidence-Based Practices

Refers to any concept or strategy that is derived from or informed by objective evidence—most commonly, educational research or metrics of school, teacher, and student performance

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Future Thinking
> Considerations of upcoming needs, responsibilities, etc. that impact one's thinking and decision-making in the present (e.g. working ahead on an essay during the week before a weekend sporting event)

Growth Mindset
> As coined by Dr. Carol Dweck, it describes the underlying belief that one can become stronger and smarter by persisting through failure, which generally leads one to apply additional energy and time on learning tasks, thus leading to achievement

Identity
> The part of one's personality of which one is aware and is able to see as a meaningful and coherent whole, despite being composed of multiple parts/layers (e.g. race, gender, culture)

Implicit Bias
> Refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases— leading us to make both favorable and unfavorable evaluations—are activated involuntarily, without an individual's awareness or intent

Metacognition
> Put simply, thinking about one's thinking. More precisely, the processes used to plan, monitor, and assess one's understanding and performance (i.e. critical awareness of one's thinking and learning)

Risk-Taking (specific to adolescence)
> During adolescence, supporting autonomy includes supporting positive risk taking. Learning requires taking risks—which are essentially actions for which the outcomes are unknown—and learning from the results. Adolescents are primed for risk taking due to the stage of brain development they are in. What qualifies as a risk is highly personal and subject to the context of the experience: For some students, starring in a school play feels like a thrilling risk, while for others, simply raising a hand in class feels risky.

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Scaffolding
A process in which educators model or demonstrate how to solve a problem, and gradually provide less support and guidance as a student approaches the ability to do a task alone

School Climate
The attitude of a school and its effect on people's experiences of school life

School Culture
The personality of a school, including the ways that teachers and staff work together to operate their community based on the implicit set of beliefs, values, and assumptions they hold

Self-Regulation
The method or procedure that learners use to manage and organize their thoughts and convert them into skills used for learning

Social Cognition
The ability to process, store, and appropriately apply information about other people and social situations. Ex) Recognizing the appropriate time to enter or interrupt a conversation

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)
The process through which individuals understand and manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (See more at CASEL.org)

Social Evaluation
Sensitivity to the way one is perceived by others, including feelings of belonging, acceptance, admiration, and respect. A defining feature of adolescence is a newfound importance of peer and romantic relationships and social sensitivity, which intensifies the attention, salience, and emotion related to processing information about one's social standing

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Strengths-Based Approaches

A philosophical stance and daily practice that shapes how an individual engages the teaching and learning process. Central principles include measurement, individualization, networking, deliberate application, and intentional development, through which educators lead students learn to put their strengths to work in learning and social situations

Student-Centered Learning

Refers to a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students

Youth Voice

Refers to the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of youth and the degree to which those backgrounds and perspectives are considered, included, listened to, and acted upon when important decisions are being made in a school or district

References

CASEL.org

Edglossary.org

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