

# The dynamics of City Year interactions with students and how they contribute to social-emotional learning and academic outcomes

Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University, 2023



This 2023 report is the final in a series that explores City Year's holistic approach and the impact that AmeriCorps members, serving as student success coaches (SSCs), can have on students' academic and social-emotional growth and learning environments. SSCs strive to help create welcoming schools that promote positive relationships, deeper engagement, and a sense of belonging for students and the adults who work with them.

The Dynamics of City Year Interactions report highlights the essential role that trust plays in supporting students' academic growth and creating a positive AmeriCorps member experience, outcomes that improve learning and working conditions for everyone in the schoolhouse.

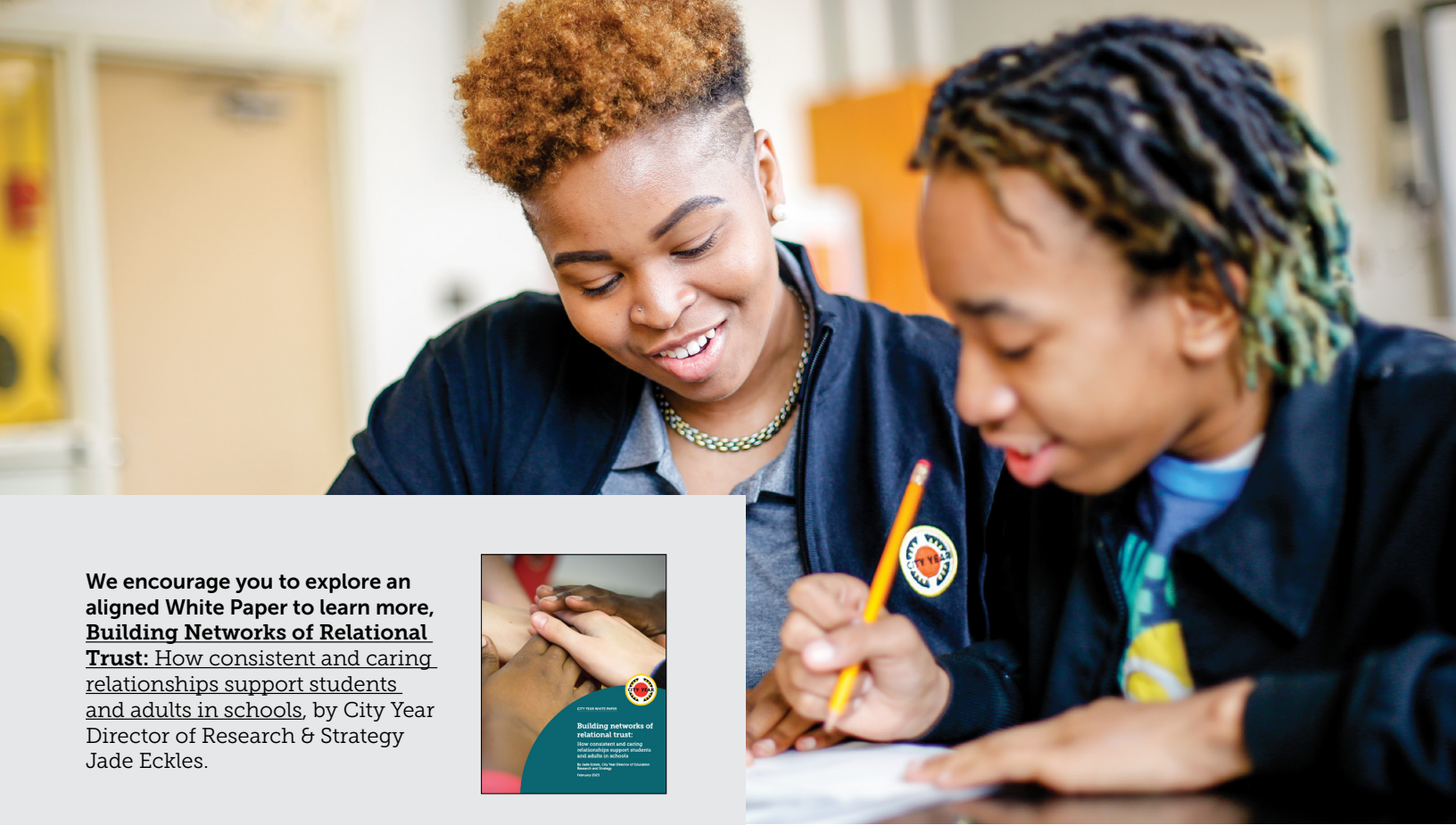
"Trust and academic success go hand-in-hand." –QUOTE FROM CITY YEAR AMERICORPS MEMBER



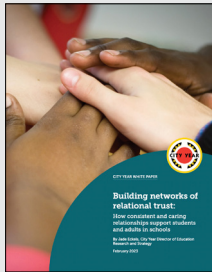
**Report background: In the summer of 2022, researchers from the Everyone Graduates Center conducted interviews, focus groups and school visits at two City Year sites to better understand the relationships formed between AmeriCorps members and students; teachers and AmeriCorps members; and the impact that learning environments have on both students and AmeriCorps members.**

## MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE 2023 REPORT INCLUDE:

- 1 AmeriCorps members, serving as student success coaches, framed their roles and responsibilities as a **"tutor," "mentor," and a "constant" in students' lives**, while also working "in-service" to the broader school community.
- 2 Across contexts, AmeriCorps members described **trust as the foundation for developing relationships with students**. The corps relied on a multitude of strategies for cultivating trust, including establishing clear boundaries and being authentic with students.
- 3 Within the classroom, academic support was often prioritized, resulting in reduced opportunities for student success coaches to consistently provide planned and intentional SEL skill development activities. Thus, AmeriCorps members relied heavily on offering **in-the-moment SEL interventions**.
- 4 AmeriCorps members valued holistic approaches and leveraged various strategies to maintain a **"people first, students second" mentality**. These included asking students about their well-being, family, and friends before moving into lesson content, and showing students respect by encouraging their autonomy.
- 5 Overall, the **environmental contexts of the classrooms, school, and community** as well as the **organizational culture of City Year** significantly impacted AmeriCorps members' service year experiences. In some cases, highly supportive contexts enabled both student success coaches and students to thrive. In others, corps members voiced how the learning environment posed challenges to navigating their roles.

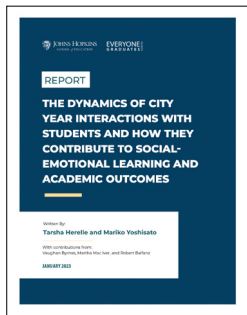


We encourage you to explore an aligned White Paper to learn more, **Building Networks of Relational Trust**: How consistent and caring relationships support students and adults in schools, by City Year Director of Research & Strategy Jade Eckles.



## Explore other studies in the series:

### 2023 REPORT

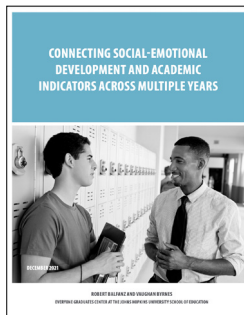


**The Dynamics of City Year Interactions With Students and How They Contribute to Social-Emotional Learning and Academic Outcomes**



[2023 Report Overview](#)

### 2022 REPORT

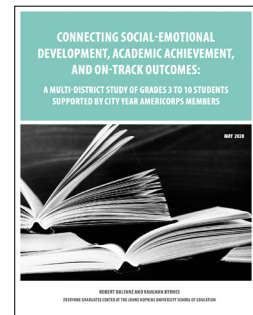


**Connecting Social-Emotional Development and Academic Indicators Across Multiple Years**



[2022 Report Overview](#)

### 2020 REPORT



**Connecting Social-Emotional Development, Academic Achievement, and On-Track Outcomes: A Multi-District Study of Grades 3-10 Students Supported by City Year AmeriCorps Members**



[2020 Report Overview](#)