

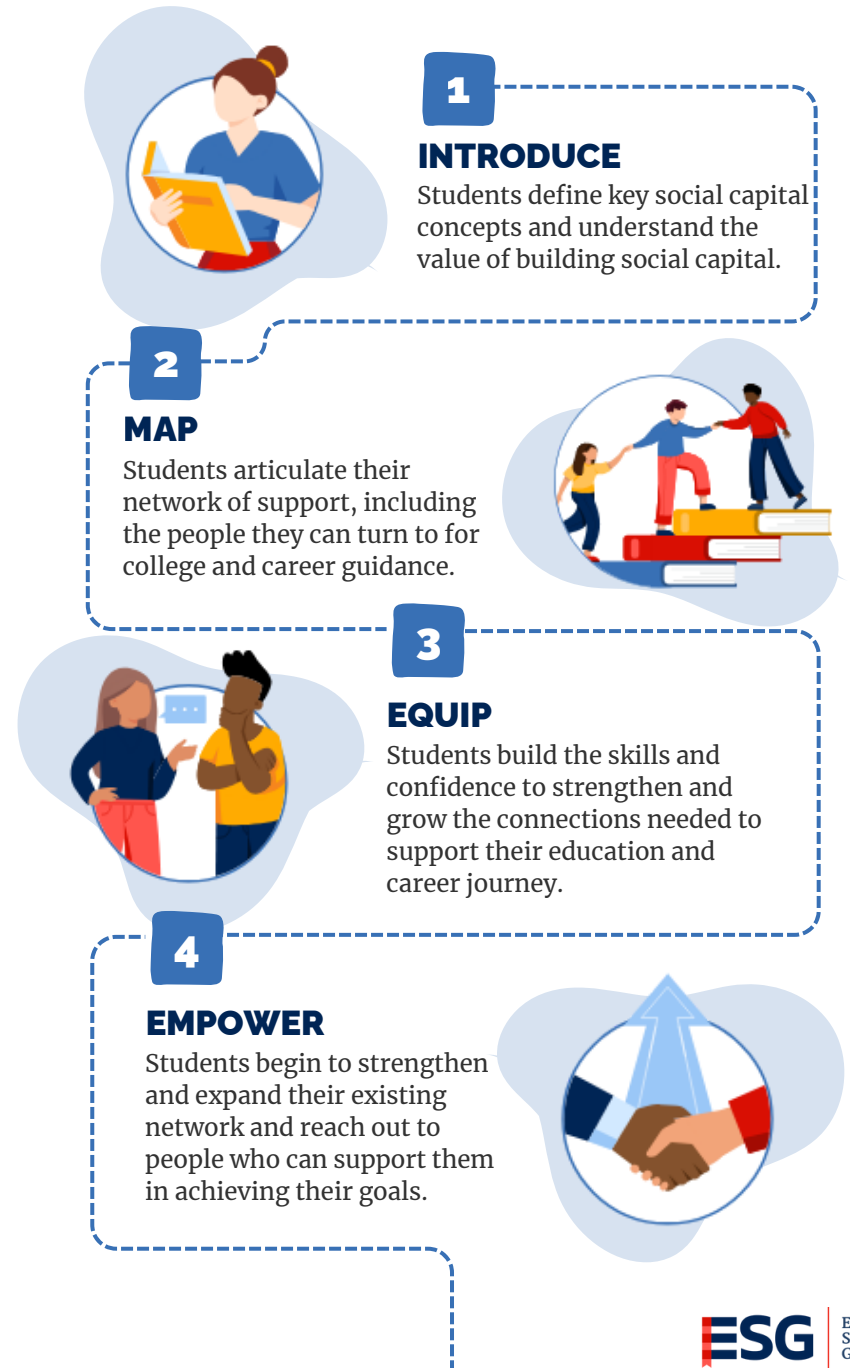
Social Capital Scope & Sequence

Overview

Social capital refers to the relationships and networks one has and the ability to leverage these connections for information, resources, and opportunities (for example, career advice, internships, job interviews). **This scope and sequence provides a progression of learning objectives aligned to typical competencies for students in middle and high schools, alongside activities and resources that can help educators guide students as they build their social capital knowledge and skill set and activate their networks.** An overview of this four-step progression is outlined to the right, with more detailed guidelines provided in the pages that follow. While this scope and sequence provides a set of turnkey resources with suggested activities to use for instruction, educators are encouraged to adapt these to fit their and their students' needs, create additional lessons & activities, and/or seek out other resources that can help students achieve each goal in the framework.

Companion Resources

- **[Cultivating Connections Framework](#):** A comprehensive process through which schools and districts, state education agencies, and other organizations can build, strengthen, and mobilize students' social capital.
- **[Pathways Integration Strategy](#):** A roadmap for where district leaders can begin to systemically integrate the ESG Scope and Sequence within their existing college and career pathways.
- **[Social Capital Lesson Plans](#):** Eight lesson plans designed for practitioners that work directly with students with more detailed guidance that correspond with the Social Capital Scope & Sequence.
- **[Student Social Capital Plan](#):** A workbook that offers a place for students to record their understanding of social capital concepts, document the people currently in their network and ideas for expanding these connections, and reflect on their skills, achievements, & goals for more details, see page 4).



Important Grounding Principles

Every organization should take the time to reflect on what they believe about social capital. **An integral part of the practitioner training should include a discussion on the mindsets needed to responsibly and effectively teach social capital concepts skills to young people.** We ground the Scope & Sequence on the following principles:



PRINCIPLE 1: Every student should be learning to grow, expand, and leverage their social capital

Social capital learning isn't just for extroverted students or those on a pathway to a four-year college. These skills and tools are essential for navigating a continuously evolving labor market and for easing inevitable career transitions. Strategies and resources may need to be adapted to better reach particular groups of students but every learner should be developing this skill set and receiving the support to actively build their network.



PRINCIPLE 2: Student needs, goals, and ambitions should be centered

Students should have access to meaningful opportunities to build social capital that are aligned with their goals and interests. Centering student voice and choice can ensure that the skills and connections they are building are directly connected to where they see themselves in the future. Building networks with intentionality can bring greater clarity and purpose for students than simply adding connections for connections sake.



PRINCIPLE 3: Every community has assets that can be leveraged

No community is starting this work entirely from scratch. There are pockets within every school or system in which students are building relationships - with peers, school staff, or community partners. Leveraging these existing spaces and expertise can help accelerate this work and build a more cohesive thread across these efforts.



PRINCIPLE 4: Every student has a network to build on.

Regardless of their background or circumstances, every student has a network and those relationships can carry value in a variety of ways. Avoiding assumptions about who a student might or might not know and judgement about the value of those connections opens the door for more productive and asset-based conversations about the importance of social capital. Students should be encouraged to examine their networks for strengths and opportunities, with the understanding that their connections are already valuable but networks can always be enhanced to better support their goals and aspirations.



PRINCIPLE 5: Aim for authenticity.

There's a risk that conversations about social capital can be seen as transactional and inauthentic when talking about value. Encourage participants and students to think about the importance of investing in and maintaining relationships before needing to call upon them. Invite them to reflect on the ways they serve as a resource and support, often without expecting anything in return. Relationships should be continually fostered, even as networks grow and change over time and connections may be called upon for different types of support over the course of one's life.



PRINCIPLE 6: Social capital is a long game.

It is important to emphasize for students that the practice of building their social capital is a lifelong one. The skills they are developing will serve them throughout their educational journey and career. As such, this work cannot be limited to one program or course. Students should be building social capital and relevant skills all along their secondary path, revisiting conversations and continually reflecting on their growing networks.

How to Use This Guide

This Scope & Sequence is designed to be adapted to your particular context; practitioners are encouraged to leverage these activities to meet goals of their course or program. Each piece of the detailed steps within the Scope & Sequence are described below to provide more guidance for how to use this resource with your students. **This tool is meant to be used within the context of the larger [Implementation Framework](#) and assumes preparation of staff prior to using the Scope & Sequence for instruction in the classroom.**

The **Goal** at the top of each page outlines the intention of each of the steps for all students, regardless of grade or current level of social capital knowledge.



1

INTRODUCE

Goal: Define key social capital concepts and understand the value of building social capital.

Student Activities include a list of suggested activities to achieve the objectives under each guiding question. These activities are not necessarily sequential, nor do teachers need to complete every activity. Educators may also use the accompanying **Lesson Plans** to facilitate some of these activities.

For guidance on when to use these activities, see the **Sample Pacing Guide** in the Appendix.

	Early Secondary	Later Secondary
Guiding Questions	What is social capital and how can it help me in school and life?	What is social capital and how can it help me as I plan for college and career?
Objectives	Students will: 1.1.a Define social capital & relevant terms, such as network, strong ties and weak ties 1.2.a Compare and contrast weak and strong ties and the value each provides 1.3.a Differentiate between types of social support & categorize real examples from their lives	Students will: 1.1.b Define social capital & relevant terms, such as network, strong ties and weak ties 1.2.b Discuss how connections can be helpful for college and career planning and in the job market. 1.3.b Reflect on their postsecondary goals and identify potential sources of support to help achieve those goals
Student Activities	- Watch & discuss Social Capital: The Power of Relationships. - Discuss how connections translate into different supports. - Brainstorm examples of weak ties and strong ties with peers. - Complete Tab 1 in the Student Social Capital Plan.	- Watch & discuss Social Capital: The Power of Relationships. - Compare different postsecondary paths and research sources of support for each. - Read & discuss Which Connections Really Help You Find a Job. - Read & discuss More teens say they're using AI for friendship. Here's why researchers are concerned. - Complete Tab 1 in the Student Social Capital Plan.
Assessing for Understanding	Beginning understanding looks like: - Students can describe specific ways people provide support to one another (e.g., emotional or informational support) and can name everyday examples. Developing understanding looks like: - Students correctly and fluently use terms such as community, social capital, weak ties, and strong ties during discussion. - Students can explain how social capital will contribute to their future success. Advanced understanding looks like: - Students can articulate potential support they can seek out to help them achieve their goals, such as exploring careers or gaining helpful information.	
Practitioner tools & resources	Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 1: Introduction to Social Capital (Lesson Plan) Connected Futures (virtual lesson plans) A Guide to Talking about Social Capital (slide deck) Social Capital PD Modules 101 & 102 (professional development slide deck and guide) The Real Strength of Weak Ties (Stanford news article) Getting Started: How Every Student Benefits from a Strong & Diverse Network (design elements with research-informed examples)	

The **Guiding Questions & Objectives** provide additional guidance for what students should know or be able to do at various grade levels.

Assessing for Understanding provides guidance for practitioners to check students' understanding or mastery of social capital concepts or skills. These are broken out by different levels of understanding.

The **Practitioner Tools & Resources** are included with links to additional lesson plans, and background reading materials to help educators understand concepts within each step, or articles that can be used as sources of additional background knowledge or to jump start an activity with students.



1 INTRODUCE

Goal: Define key social capital concepts and understand the value of building social capital.

Early Secondary		Later Secondary
Guiding Questions	What is social capital and how can it help me in school and life?	What is social capital and how can it help me as I plan for college and career?
Objectives	Students will: • 1.1.a Define social capital & relevant terms, such as network, strong ties and weak ties • 1.2.a Compare and contrast weak and strong ties and the value each provides • 1.3.a Differentiate between types of social support & categorize real examples from their lives	Students will: • 1.1.b Define social capital & relevant terms, such as network, strong ties and weak ties • 1.2.b Discuss how connections can be helpful for college and career planning and in the job market. • 1.3.b Reflect on their postsecondary goals and identify potential sources of support to help achieve those goals
Student Activities	• Watch & discuss Social Capital: The Power of Relationships. • Discuss how connections translate into different supports. • Brainstorm examples of weak ties and strong ties with peers. • Complete Tab 1 in the Student Social Capital Plan.	• Watch & discuss Social Capital: The Power of Relationships. • Compare different postsecondary paths and research sources of support for each. • Read & discuss Which Connections Really Help You Find a Job. • Read & discuss More teens say they're using AI for friendship. Here's why researchers are concerned. • Complete Tab 1 in the Student Social Capital Plan.
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Practitioner tools & resources	• Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 1: Introduction to Social Capital (Lesson Plan) • Connected Futures (virtual lesson plans) • A Guide to Talking about Social Capital (slide deck) • Social Capital PD Modules 101 & 102 (professional development slide deck and guide) • The Real Strength of Weak Ties (Stanford news article) • Getting Started: How Every Student Benefits from a Strong & Diverse Network (design elements with research-informed examples)	



Goal: Students articulate their network of support, including the people they can turn to for college and career guidance.

Early Secondary		Later Secondary
Guiding Questions	What is a network and who is in mine?	Who in my network is helping me get ready for life after high school?
Objectives	Students will: • M.1.a Map the people who make up their current network and their different contexts (school, extracurriculars, family) • M.2.a Describe the different types of social support the people in their network provide • M.3.a Distinguish between the weak and strong ties in their lives and specify the types of resources each provides to them • M.4.a Develop a goal for strengthening and/or growing their network	Students will: • M.1.b Map the people who make up their current network and their different contexts (school, extracurriculars, family) • M.2.b Assess specific ways (including the type of social support offered) that their current networks helped them get to where they are now • M.3.b Evaluate the diversity of their current network and articulate who they would like to add • M.4.b Develop a goal for strengthening and/or growing their network
Student Activities	• Create relationship maps to visually represent current networks and identify types of support that people in their networks can provide. (Example lessons in Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 2, Web of Support Framework, pg. 3, and Relationship Mapping Activity) • Create personal timelines to better understand identities, interests, and potential careers. (see example in Social Capital PD Module 103, Slides 122–127). • Complete Tab 2 in the Student Social Capital Plan.	• Create/update personal timelines & relationship maps. • Take a survey with SCALE measures to better understand their own perceptions of their network and discuss results with peers and a teacher. • Review their relationship map to better understand the diversity (demographic, profession, geography) of their network and discuss the importance of having a diverse network and who else they might want to include in theirs (example in this exercise). • Consider the type of support needed to prepare for college and career planning and develop a list of individuals that to reach out to (if applicable, document these connections as part of ICAP activities). • Complete Tab 2 in the Student Social Capital Plan.
Assessing for Understanding	Beginning understanding looks like: • Students name specific people in their communities who make up their support system. Developing understanding looks like: • Students describe specific supports provided by those in their network. Advanced understanding looks like: • Students articulate goals related to strengthening or growing their network. • Students identify specific connections they can make to receive other types of support.	
Practitioner tools & resources	• Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 2: Relationship Mapping (Lesson Plan) • People-Powered Pathways: Lessons in how to build students' social capital through career-connected learning (background research and sample lessons) • Take Stock: Getting to know who your students know (design elements with research-informed examples) • Relationship Check Tool (assessment of educator, practitioner, peer, and family relationships)	



Goal: Students build the skills and confidence to strengthen and grow the connections needed to support their education and career journey.

Early Secondary		Later Secondary
Guiding Questions	How do I build the skills and confidence to connect with my network?	How do I initiate a college and career conversations with people in my network?
Objectives	Students will: • Eq.1.a Describe their achievements, skills, and career goals • Eq.2.a Identify the tools, knowledge, and skills they need to best connect with the people in their network • Eq.3.a Begin to seek help from adults in their school and community • Eq.4.a Articulate their value to relationships with people in their network	Students will: • Eq.1.b Create a succinct description of their skills and goals and practice delivery to peers and trusted adults • Eq.2.b Understand their value and support provided to their existing network and to prospective connections • Eq.3.b Initiate discussions with trusted adults about careers
Student Activities	• Discuss scenarios when social capital skills can be utilized (e.g., in the workplace, networking, during a job search). • Document extracurricular activities and academic achievements & discuss skills demonstrated through each using this Skills Translator (if applicable, incorporate these into ICAP activities). • Develop an elevator pitch to practice talking about themselves with peers and caring adults. • Draft short- and long-term goals for school and discuss who can help them achieve these goals and practice talking about them. • Practice active listening and communication skills during one-on-one conversations with peers and caring adults. • Reflect on cultural norms/experiences and discuss how this informs connections and communication with people in various contexts. • Identify someone in their network that has an interesting career and develop a list of questions to ask them about that career. • Complete Tab 3 in the Student Social Capital Plan.	• Create a resume that highlights achievements and skills and regularly update with new experiences and learning (Skills Translator worksheet). • Reflect on the skills developed from everyday experiences (i.e., caring for a family member, balancing school and extracurricular activities, etc.) • Develop, refine, and practice an elevator pitch to briefly describe background, interests, and goals. • Practice active listening and communication skills during conversations with their network. • Create a LinkedIn profile using resumes and browse the different people featured on the site. Search for people from their own network. • Create a professional email address and discuss the do's and don'ts when reaching out to a professional contact. • Identify someone in their network with an interesting background or career and draft an email request for an informational interview and a list of questions to ask. (Example lesson plan on informational interviews) • Complete Tab 3 in the Student Social Capital Plan.
Assessing for Understanding	Beginning understanding looks like: • Students can identify strategies for strengthening their current relationships and developing new connections. • Students can ask questions that deepen ties with their existing and growing network. Developing understanding looks like: • Students produce quality, tangible artifacts that display their skills and achievements, such as a resume, LinkedIn profile, or ICAP. Advanced understanding looks like: • Students clearly and confidently articulate their skills, achievements, and goals (e.g., with an elevator pitch).	
Practitioner tools & resources	• Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 3: Building a Resume, Lesson Plan 4: Creating an Elevator Speech, or Lesson Plan 5, What is an Informational Interview? • Career Conversations Starters (grade level guidelines to address the American School Counselor Association Student Mindsets & Behaviors) • Colorful Conversations (lesson plan) • LinkedIn Profile Tips for High School Students (checklist) • High School Grade-by-Grade Career Checklist (checklist)	



Goal: Students begin to strengthen and expand their existing network and reach out to people who can support them in achieving their goals.

Early Secondary		Later Secondary
Guiding Questions	What is networking and how can it help me?	How can I expand my network to help with college & career planning?
Objectives	Students will: • Em.1.a Define networking & discuss how and why connections can be helpful • Em.2.a Articulate how connections to school adults support educational endeavors • Em.3.a Engage with adults to gain insight into field of interest	Students will: • Em.1.b Assess progress toward goals & identify adults who can help achieve them • Em.2.b Add new contacts to their relationship maps • Em.3.b Reach out to new contacts as they engage in postsecondary planning • Em.4.b Identify ways to stay connected to contacts to maintain those relationships • Em.5.b Engage in career-connected experiences that facilitate social capital skills
Student Activities	• Identify a time that a connection helped them. • Engage in Networking Bingo with peers. • Identify a list of adults within their school they can approach for help. • Revisit the list of adults created in Step 2; brainstorm other helpful adults to ask for help. • Practice conversations with adults in students' networks (e.g., asking questions to understand journeys, seeking advice). • Conduct an informational interview with someone in a career of interest. Reach out to someone in their network or request help from a teacher to find someone to talk to. • Job shadow someone in a field of interest and identify contacts that they can add to their network • Complete Tab 4 in the Student Social Capital Plan.	• Visit/Revisit the concept of networking, how to do it, and why it's important. • Update relationship maps and list ideas of people who can help achieve their goals. • Discuss Texas Teen's Nonprofit Helps Kids Across the World Gain Networking Skills • Provide opportunities for students to talk to adults or near-peers about how social capital and networking has played a role in their lives. • After career exploration activities, follow up with people working in a career of interest with a thank you note and/or connect with them on LinkedIn. • Conduct an informational interview with someone in your network or request help from a teacher to find someone to talk to. • Practice social capital building skills by connecting with professionals during work-based learning opportunities, such as internships or job shadowing. • Organize a networking event with career professionals chosen based on students' expressed fields of interest. • Complete Tab 4 in the Student Social Capital Plan.
Assessing for Understanding	Beginning understanding looks like: • Students can communicate how their network has grown over time and how they have achieved this growth. • Students can verbalize how their network has contributed to their success and/or how they have contributed to the success of another connection. Developing understanding looks like: • Students can identify actions that will contribute to meeting their goals. • Student documentation of new connections in their ICAPs or other resources designed to capture these connections. Advanced understanding looks like: • Students demonstrate an ability to conduct professional communication to grow and maintain their relationships or activate their network. • Older students develop specific strategies they will use post-high school to continue to build social capital.	
Practitioner tools & resources	• Cultivating Connections Lesson Plan 6: Introduction to Networking, Lesson Plan 7: Conducting an Informational Interview, or Lesson Plan 8, Engaging with Professionals at a Career Event • Peer MentoringWorks (networking activity guide) • Learn to Love Networking (article) • Should I be networking? Exploring the importance of networking for students (article) • Networking 101 for Introverts (article) • Talking about Careers: Research and Recommendations (module)	

Sample Pacing Guide (Semester)

There are several ways that the activities in this Scope & Sequence can be integrated into the school day or other programming (see the [Pathways Integration Strategy](#) for more). This pacing guide provides a starting point for deciding how to schedule these activities throughout a semester, which can be done in conjunction with the [Student Social Capital tool](#) referenced on page 5.

Timing considerations: Educators should feel free to adjust the use of activities to align with what works best with their existing course of study. For example, if time permits to hold activities for multiple class periods, then educators can use as many activities as desired. Alternatively, if time is limited, educators can use activities that only take one class period. Additionally, if the activities in one quarter are completed quicker than expected, educators should feel free to move on to the next step, regardless of the 9-week period. Finally, consider scheduled events, such as career fairs, when planning for these activities.

Introduce	Map	Equip	Empower
Estimated time: Three weeks	Estimated time: Three weeks	Estimated time: Eight weeks	Estimated time: Four weeks
As you get to know students in the beginning weeks of the school year, incorporate discussions of community, the types of support one receives from their community and, if applicable, specific instruction on social capital definitions. One class period: - Facilitate discussion activities outlined on page 7 - Introduce social capital terms and discuss the meaning of each using a vocabulary-building strategy of your choice Multiple class periods/ongoing: - As appropriate and relevant, continue to hold space for discussions of community and support throughout the semester Additional class periods/homework: - Research sources of support for various postsecondary paths	After students have met the goal of the Introduce step, you can build off that knowledge by having them map out their own networks and, if applicable, begin thinking about how to expand them. One class period: - Facilitate a discussion of the ways the people in students' communities support them - Personal timeline activity - Relationship mapping activity Multiple class periods/ongoing - Continue conversations that acknowledge and celebrate students' networks - Initiate conversations about who else students would like in their networks Additional class periods/homework: - Expansion of relationship mapping activity (i.e., analysis of current ties and development of goals to expand network)	Once students have mapped and analyzed their networks in the Map step, students can begin practicing the skills to expand their social capital. One class period: - Identifying skills, achievements, and goals can start in the classroom, with support from peers and practitioners Multiple class periods/ongoing: - Drafting, developing, and practicing an elevator pitch - Informational interview activities Additional class periods/homework: - Continued drafting/reflection on skills, achievements, and goals - Drafting a resume - Creating a LinkedIn profile	As students continue to develop and practice the skills outlined in the Equip step, they can begin to expand their network with people who can support them in achieving their goals. One class period/event/activity: - Networking Bingo activity - Update relationship maps and brainstorm people who they can reach out to that would be helpful to have in their networks - During career fairs, connect with people in a field of interest Multiple class periods/ongoing: - Intentionally connect with professionals during work-based learning experiences Additional class periods/homework: - Conduct an informational interview and reflect afterward

Note: The number of class periods for activities are estimations and may take shorter or longer, depending on the needs of your students.

Glossary

- **Career conversations:** Two-way conversations where you talk about your career interests. They're a chance to get input from someone — like a teacher, counselor, parent, friend, or mentor — to help you explore options and make decisions.
- **Elevator speech:** A short, compelling summary that explains who you are, what you care about, and what you're working toward. It's what you'd say if you had just 30 seconds to introduce yourself and spark interest.
- **Emotional support:** When someone listens to you during a personal or private issue, or spends time with you when you're feeling down or stressed. It's about feeling heard, understood, and cared for.
- **Companionship:** Spending time with someone to relax or have fun, often over shared interests. Examples include getting lunch together between classes or playing soccer on the weekends.
- **Individualized Career and Academic Plan (ICAP):** A plan you create with your parents/caregivers and school staff to guide your education and career choices — like picking classes, joining activities, and planning for life after high school. Your ICAP should grow and change as your interests and goals evolve.
- **Informational support:** Advice or information that helps you solve a problem or make a decision. Examples include help with a financial aid application, tips for choosing classes, or someone writing you a recommendation letter.
- **Mentor:** Someone who helps you learn and grow by sharing advice, encouragement, and real-life experience. A mentor might be a teacher, coach, supervisor, or older student — someone who supports you and helps you figure things out.
- **Network:** The group of people you know — and who know you. It includes friends, teachers, family, coworkers, and others who can help you learn new things, find opportunities, and reach your goals.
- **Relationship mapping:** A strategy to help you visualize, reflect on, and keep track of the people in your life — especially those who support your learning, growth, and career goals.
- **Resources:** Tools, information, or support you get from people in your network. Resources can be things like advice, encouragement, access to opportunities, or help with a task.
- **Social capital:** The relationships and networks you have — and your ability to use those connections to get information, support, and opportunities like career advice, mentorship, internships, or job interviews.
- **Strong tie:** People you're closest to, like family, close friends, or mentors. These relationships often provide emotional support and encouragement.
- **Tangible support:** When someone gives or lends you something you need, or helps you with a task. For example, driving you somewhere, lending you money, or helping you with school supplies.
- **Weak tie:** People you don't know very well — like acquaintances or distant connections. These ties often lead to new information, advice, or opportunities, and are an important part of your network.