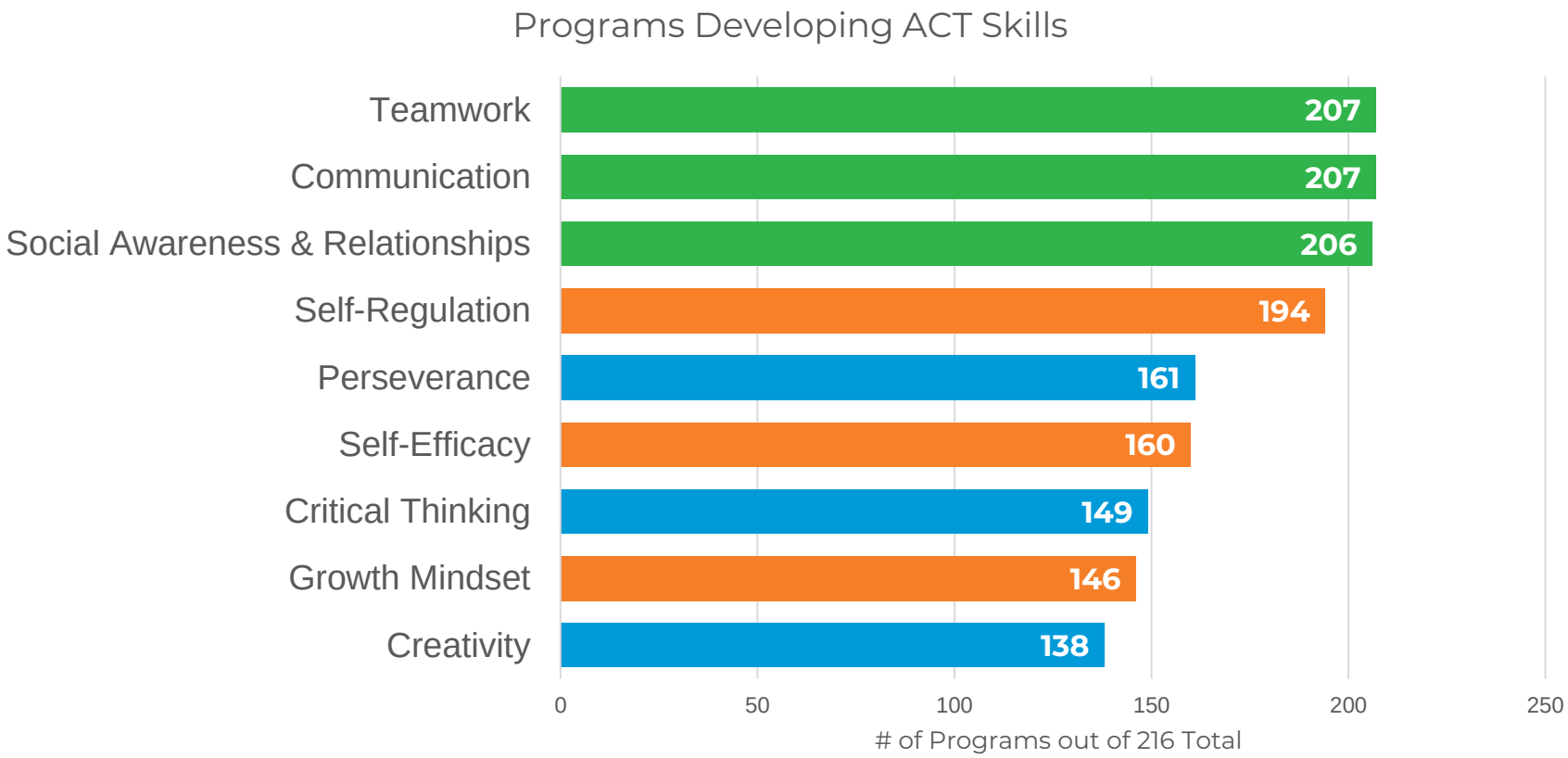
Boston
After School
& Beyond

The ACT Skills: Self-Efficacy

The Achieve-Connect-Thrive Skills

Connect Skills are the most widely taught



Representative of 2023-2024 School Year

What is Self-Efficacy?

Self-efficacy involves believing in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task; is often task or situation dependent.

Research shows that self-efficacy influences school grades and classroom engagement. Young people with high self-efficacy will show confidence in their own abilities, know they are in control of their own behavior, and be open to risks and challenges.

Why Self-Efficacy?

- Self-efficacy impacts students' academic achievement and pro-social behavior

  Bandura et al., 1996

- Important for success, resilience, self-regulation

  Maddux, 2020

What does Self-Efficacy look like?

- Appropriate confidence (in specific areas, topics)
- Clear understanding of skills
- Optimism, resilience, problem-solving in the face of challenges
- “belief that you have the skills that you can rely on… to reach your goals”

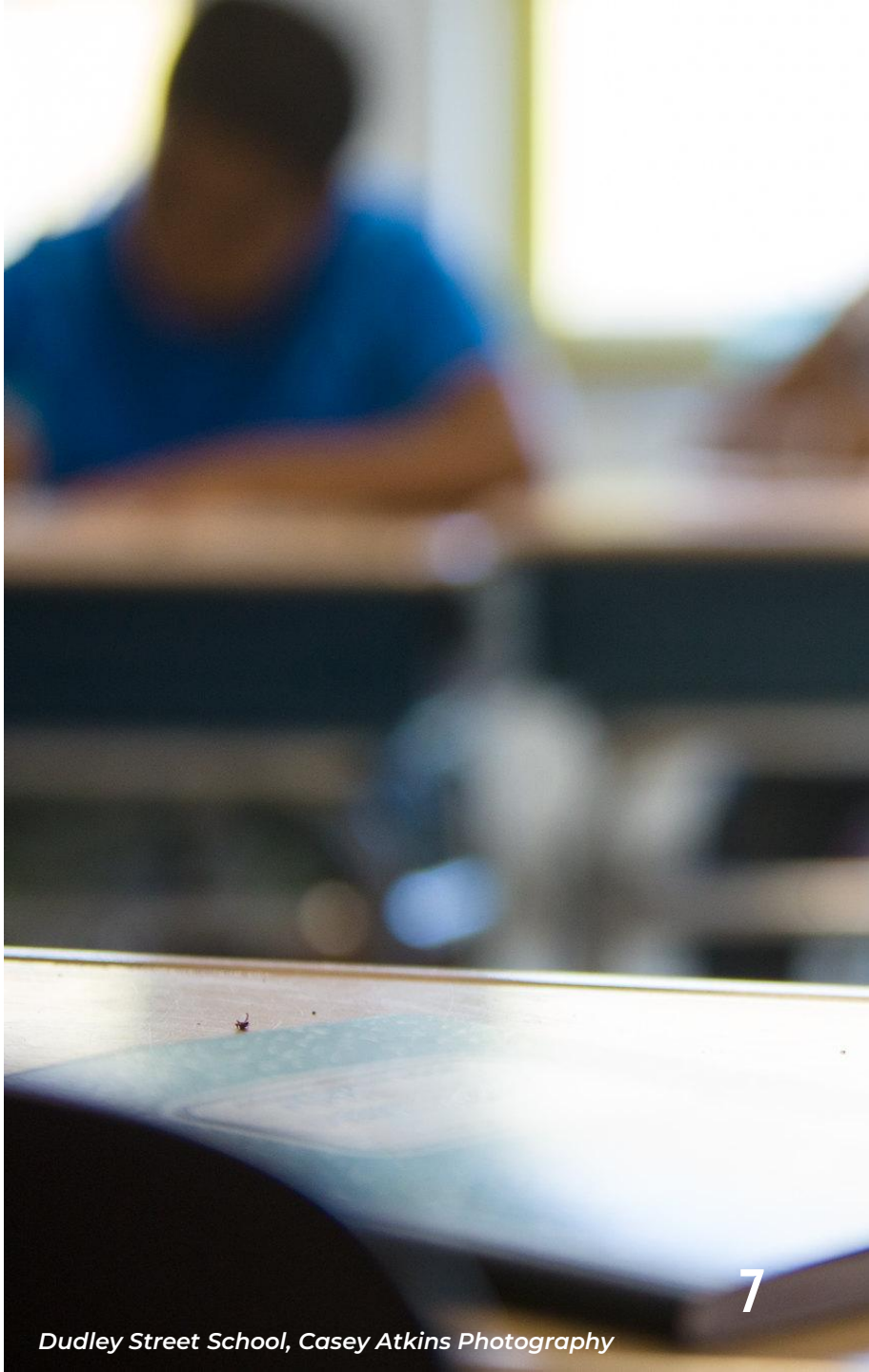
NASP, 2010

Boston Lions Track Club

What does a lack of Self-Efficacy look like?

- Negative self-talk (self-fulfilling prophecy)
- Giving up quickly after barriers/challenges arise
- Overconfidence, no skills to back it up
- Fixed mindset (not growth)

NASP, 2010



Dudley Street School, Casey Atkins Photography

How to Encourage Self-Efficacy

1. Mastery & Experience

2. Learn from Failure

3. Use Process Praise

1) Mastery & Experience

- Help students build skills or master new techniques
- Break down bigger goals/skills into smaller pieces to practice
- Notice and celebrate progress and success → positive self-perception

NASP, 2010
Pogosyan, 2022

Haynes Early Education Center

2) Learn from Failure

- Acknowledge the failure
- Identify specific strengths to use next time
  - Affirm their skills
  - Figure out how to use skills
  - Encourage resilience

NASP, 2010

Piers Park Sailing Center

3) Use Process Praise

- Praise students' efforts and strategies, not their traits
  e.g., for trying different tactics vs. being smart
- Link students' efforts and strategies with successful outcomes
- Be specific in your praise to challenge negative self-talk

NASP, 2010

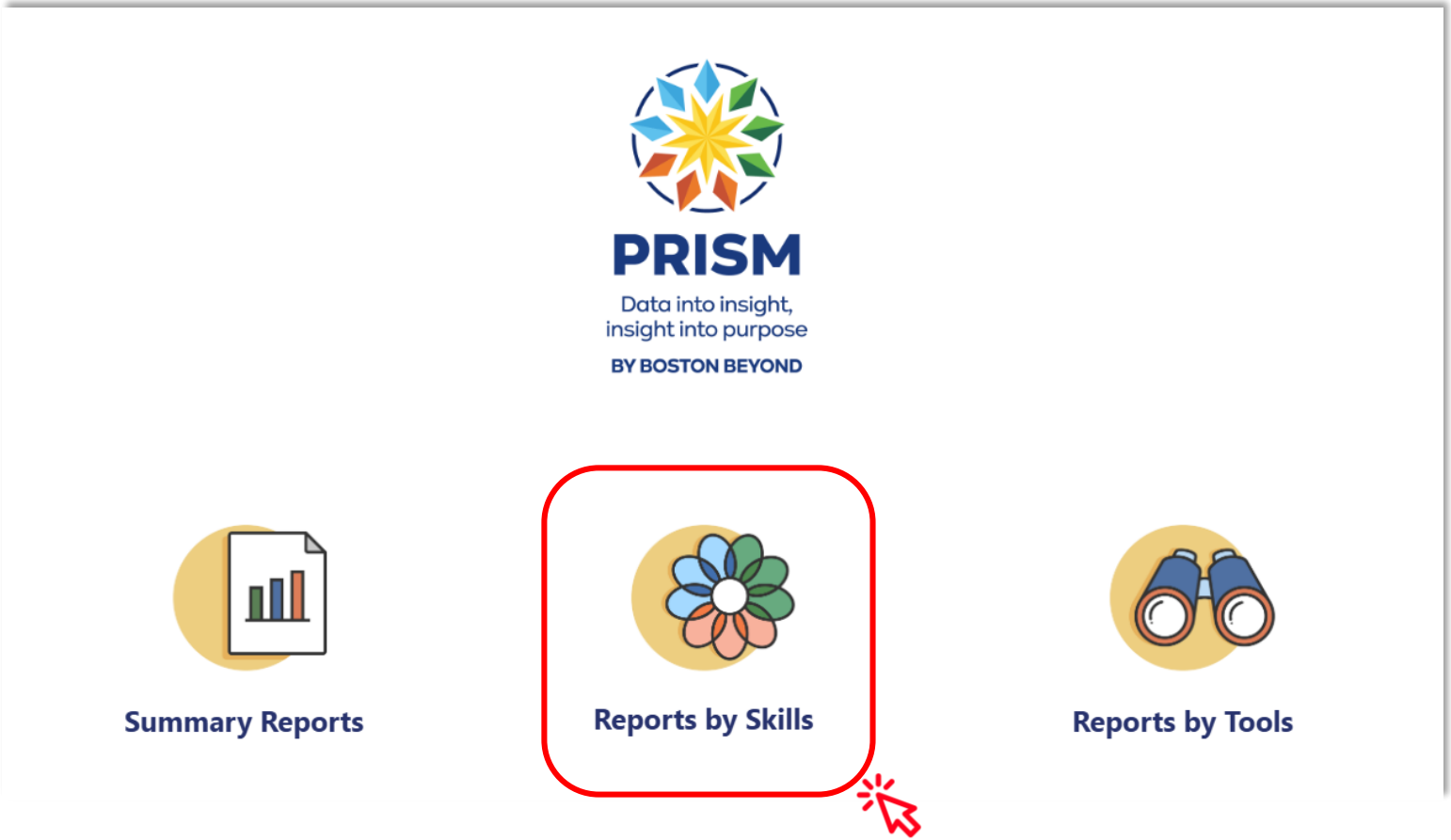
Tierney Learning Center, Casey Atkins Photography

Building Self-Efficacy beyond school

Children's Services of Roxbury
Strengthening Families across Massachusetts
Roxbury • Tewksbury • Worcester • Northampton

BIKES NOT BOMBS .ORG

Don’t forget the Reports by Skills in the PRISM



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