

40 Developmental Assets®

Search InstituteSM has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



Category	Asset Name and Definition				
External Assets	Support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. 				
	Empowerment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. 				
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. 			
		Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. 		
			Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. 	
				Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
					Social Competencies
		Positive Identity			

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial uses only.

40 Developmental Assets® for Children Grades K-3 (ages 5-9)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets**®—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family Support—Family continues to be a consistent provider of love and support for the child's unique physical and emotional needs. Positive Family Communication—Parent(s) and child communicate openly, respectfully, and frequently, with child receiving praise for her or his efforts and accomplishments. Other Adult Relationships—Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s), with the child sometimes experiencing relationships with a nonparent adult. Caring Neighborhood—Parent(s) and child experience friendly neighbors who affirm and support the child's growth and sense of belonging. Caring School Climate—Child experiences warm, welcoming relationships with teachers, caregivers, and peers at school. Parent Involvement in Schooling—Parent(s) talk about the importance of education and are actively involved in the child's school success.
	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community Values Children—Children are welcomed and included throughout community life. Children as Resources—Child contributes to family decisions and has opportunities to participate in positive community events. Service to Others—Child has opportunities to serve in the community with adult support and approval. Safety—Parents and community adults ensure the child's safety while keeping in mind her or his increasing independence.
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family Boundaries—The family maintains supervision of the child, has reasonable guidelines for behavior, and always knows where the child is. School Boundaries—Schools have clear, consistent rules and consequences and use a positive approach to discipline. Neighborhood Boundaries—Neighbors and friends' parents help monitor the child's behavior and provide feedback to the parent(s). Adult Role Models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior and encourage the child to follow these examples. Positive Peer Influence—Parent(s) monitor the child's friends and encourage spending time with those who set good examples. High Expectations—Parent(s), teachers, and other influential adults encourage the child to do her or his best in all tasks and celebrate their successes.
	Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Activities—Child participates weekly in music, dance, or other form of artistic expression outside of school. Child Programs—Child participates weekly in at least one sport, club, or organization within the school or community. Religious Community—Child participates in age-appropriate religious activities and caring relationships that nurture her or his spiritual development. Time at Home—Child spends time at home playing and doing positive activities with the family.

Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement Motivation—Child is encouraged to remain curious and demonstrates an interest in doing well at school. Learning Engagement—Child is enthused about learning and enjoys going to school. Homework—With appropriate parental support, child completes assigned homework. Bonding to School—Child is encouraged to have and feels a sense of belonging at school. Reading for Pleasure—Child listens to and/or reads books outside of school daily.
	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Caring—Parent(s) help child grow in empathy, understanding, and helping others. Equality and Social Justice—Parent(s) encourage child to be concerned about rules and being fair to everyone. Integrity—Parent(s) help child develop her or his own sense of right and wrong behavior. Honesty—Parent(s) encourage child's development in recognizing and telling the truth. Responsibility—Parent(s) encourage child to accept and take responsibility for her or his actions at school and at home. Self-Regulation—Parents encourage child's growth in regulating her or his own emotions and behaviors and in understanding the importance of healthy habits and choices.
	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and Decision Making—Parent(s) help child think through and plan school and play activities. Interpersonal Competence—Child seeks to build friendships and is learning about self-control. Cultural Competence—Child continues to learn about her or his own cultural identity and is encouraged to interact positively with children of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Resistance Skills—Child is learning to recognize risky or dangerous situations and is able to seek help from trusted adults. Peaceful Conflict Resolution—Child continues learning to resolve conflicts without hitting, throwing a tantrum, or using hurtful language.
	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Power—Child has a growing sense of having influence over some of the things that happen in her or his life. Self-Esteem—Child likes herself or himself and feels valued by others. Sense of Purpose—Child welcomes new experiences and imagines what he or she might do or be in the future. Positive View of Personal Future—Child has a growing curiosity about the world and finding her or his place in it.

40 Developmental Assets® for Middle Childhood (ages 8-12)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s). 3. Other adult relationships—Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s). 4. Caring neighborhood—Child experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.
	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community. 8. Children as resources—Child is included in decisions at home and in the community. 9. Service to others—Child has opportunities to help others in the community. 10. Safety—Child feels safe at home, at school, and in his or her neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors the child's whereabouts. 12. School boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring the child's behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults in the child's family, as well as nonfamily adults, model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Child's closest friends model positive, responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities.
	Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week. 18. Child programs—Child participates two or more times per week in cocurricular school activities or structured community programs for children. 19. Religious community—Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week. 20. Time at home—Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games.

Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Child is motivated and strives to do well in school. 22. Learning Engagement—Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school. 23. Homework—Child usually hands in homework on time. 24. Bonding to school—Child cares about teachers and other adults at school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week.
	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people. 28. Integrity—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one's beliefs. 29. Honesty—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth. 30. Responsibility—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behavior. 31. Healthy Lifestyle—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality.
	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her- or himself. 34. Cultural Competence—Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity. 35. Resistance skills—Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Child seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life. 38. Self-esteem—Child likes and is proud to be the person that he or she is. 39. Sense of purpose—Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life. 40. Positive view of personal future—Child is optimistic about her or his personal future.



40 Developmental Assets® for Adolescents (ages 12-18)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as Developmental Assets®—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets

- Support**
- 1. Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
 - 2. Positive family communication**—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
 - 3. Other adult relationships**—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
 - 4. Caring neighborhood**—Young person experiences caring neighbors.
 - 5. Caring school climate**—School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
 - 6. Parent involvement in schooling**—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
- Empowerment**
- 7. Community values youth**—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
 - 8. Youth as resources**—Young people are given useful roles in the community.
 - 9. Service to others**—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
 - 10. Safety**—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
- Boundaries & Expectations**
- 11. Family boundaries**—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
 - 12. School boundaries**—School provides clear rules and consequences.
 - 13. Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
 - 14. Adult role models**—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
 - 15. Positive peer influence**—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
 - 16. High expectations**—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
- Constructive Use of Time**
- 17. Creative activities**—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
 - 18. Youth programs**—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
 - 19. Religious community**—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
 - 20. Time at home**—Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

Internal Assets

- Commitment to Learning**
- 21. Achievement Motivation**—Young person is motivated to do well in school.
 - 22. School Engagement**—Young person is actively engaged in learning.
 - 23. Homework**—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
 - 24. Bonding to school**—Young person cares about her or his school.
 - 25. Reading for Pleasure**—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
- Positive Values**
- 26. Caring**—Young person places high value on helping other people.
 - 27. Equality and social justice**—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
 - 28. Integrity**—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
 - 29. Honesty**—Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."
 - 30. Responsibility**—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
 - 31. Restraint**—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
- Social Competencies**
- 32. Planning and decision making**—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
 - 33. Interpersonal Competence**—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
 - 34. Cultural Competence**—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
 - 35. Resistance skills**—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
 - 36. Peaceful conflict resolution**—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
- Positive Identity**
- 37. Personal power**—Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
 - 38. Self-esteem**—Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
 - 39. Sense of purpose**—Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
 - 40. Positive view of personal future**—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

This chart shows eight areas of human development and groups the 40 Developmental Assets[®] by these categories. The percentages of young people who report experiencing each asset were gathered in 2010 from the administration of the *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey of almost 90,000 youth.

asset type	asset name and definition	
EXTERNAL ASSETS	SUPPORT	
	1. FAMILY SUPPORT — Family life provides high levels of love and support.	72%
	2. POSITIVE FAMILY COMMUNICATION — Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s).	32%
	3. OTHER ADULT RELATIONSHIPS — Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.	50%
	4. CARING NEIGHBORHOOD — Young person experiences caring neighbors.	40%
	5. CARING SCHOOL CLIMATE — School provides a caring, encouraging environment.	35%
	6. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING — Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	33%
	EMPOWERMENT	
	7. COMMUNITY VALUES YOUTH — Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	25%
	8. YOUTH AS RESOURCES — Young people are given useful roles in the community.	32%
	9. SERVICE TO OTHERS — Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	50%
	10. SAFETY — Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.	54%
	BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS	
	11. FAMILY BOUNDARIES — Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.	47%
	12. SCHOOL BOUNDARIES — School provides clear rules and consequences.	56%
	13. NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES — Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.	48%
14. ADULT ROLE MODELS — Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	28%	
15. POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE — Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.	68%	
16. HIGH EXPECTATIONS — Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	55%	
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME	17. CREATIVE ACTIVITIES — Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.	20%
	18. YOUTH PROGRAMS — Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.	61%
	19. RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY — Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.	51%
	20. TIME AT HOME — Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	56%
COMMITMENT TO LEARNING	21. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION — Young person is motivated to do well in school.	71%
	22. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT — Young person is actively engaged in learning.	62%
	23. HOMEWORK — Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	53%
	24. BONDING TO SCHOOL — Young person cares about her or his school.	61%
	25. READING FOR PLEASURE — Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	23%
POSITIVE VALUES	26. CARING — Young person places high value on helping other people.	52%
	27. EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE — Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	54%
	28. INTEGRITY — Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.	71%
	29. HONESTY — Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."	69%
	30. RESPONSIBILITY — Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	67%
31. RESTRAINT — Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	47%	
SOCIAL COMPETENCIES	32. PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING — Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	33%
	33. INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE — Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.	48%
	34. CULTURAL COMPETENCE — Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	42%
	35. RESISTANCE SKILLS — Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	45%
36. PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION — Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	44%	
POSITIVE IDENTITY	37. PERSONAL POWER — Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."	45%
	38. SELF-ESTEEM — Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	52%
	39. SENSE OF PURPOSE — Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."	63%
	40. POSITIVE VIEW OF PERSONAL FUTURE — Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.	75%



50 Ways to Show Kids You Care

By Jolene L. Roehlkepartain

Everyone in a community can make a difference in the lives of children and youth. Even if you don't think you can tackle tough problems such as violence, alcohol and other drug use, or school problems, you can make a difference by being a caring, responsible friend for young people. Need some ideas for what you can do? Here are 50 of them:

1. Notice them.
2. Smile a lot.
3. Acknowledge them.
4. Learn their names.
5. Seek them out.
6. Remember their birthdays.
7. Ask them about themselves.
8. Make eye contact when you talk.
9. Listen to them.
10. Play with them.
11. Read aloud together.
12. Giggle together.
13. Be nice.
14. Say yes a lot.
15. Tell them their feelings are okay.
16. Set boundaries that keep them safe.
17. Be honest.
18. Be yourself.
19. Listen to their stories.
20. Hug them.
21. Forget your worries and concentrate on them.
22. Notice when they're acting differently.
23. Present options when they seek your counsel.
24. Play outside together.
25. Surprise them.
26. Stay with them when they're afraid.
27. Apologize when you've done something wrong.
28. Suggest better behaviors when they act out.
29. Feed them when they're hungry.
30. Delight in their discoveries.
31. Share their excitement.
32. Send them a letter or postcard.
33. Follow them when they lead.
34. Notice when they're absent.
35. Be consistent.
36. Notice when they grow.
37. Give them space when they need it.
38. Contribute to their collections.
39. Discuss their dreams and nightmares.
40. Laugh at their jokes.
41. Be relaxed.
42. Kneel, squat, or sit so you're at their eye level.
43. Answer their questions.
44. Learn what they have to teach.
45. Use your ears more than your mouth.
46. Make yourself available.
47. Attend concerts, games, and events.
48. Find a common interest.
49. Include them in conversations.
50. Trust them.

Adapted from *150 Ways to Show Kids You Care*, Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN 800-888-7828. www.search-institute.org.

Moving to Action

The following **strategies** can be helpful in overcoming barriers that you may encounter as you attempt to make actions of intentional asset building a part of your life:

- Make It Possible
Make asset building a part of your everyday life, the activities you already do and the interactions in which you already participate.
- Make It Simple
Identify simple asset-building actions that you can do. For example, look at and acknowledge young people when you see them on the street. Make it a point to learn the names of the kids in your neighborhood, and then use their names when you greet them. Start with low-risk, low-commitment actions; then increase your time and commitment as you see fit.
- Make the Most of Your Available Time
Focus on asset-building actions that add value and power to your existing commitments and activities. Remember to utilize your spheres of personal influence.
- Commit and Don't Forget
Make a clear commitment to action, and then remind yourself to fulfill that commitment. Sharing your commitment with others is one way to spread the asset message and encourage your own accountability.

Record here one asset-building **action** that you commit to perform during the next week:

Signed: _____

Date: _____