

External & Internal Assets

Support & Commitment to Learning

External Assets are the positive experiences young people receive from the world around them. **Internal Assets** identify those characteristics and behaviors that reflect positive internal growth and development of young people.

We will highlight the External and Internal Assets of the 40 Developmental Assets in the next few issues of Prevent This. We can only address so much in our newsletters therefore we encourage you to go to the Search Institute's website, www.search-institute.org, for more information and helpful tips.

External Assets – SUPPORT CATEGORY

The 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.

- **Family Support** – family life provides high levels of love and support.
- **Positive Family Communication** – Young person and his or her 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.

How You Can Build the SUPPORT Assets:

Children and teenagers need care, affection, love, and encouragement from the people in their lives. They also need to spend time in places that are warm, caring and accepting. If you're a parent or another primary caregiver, you play a particularly important role in showing love and affection. In addition, children and teenagers need everyone around them to make special efforts to love and care for them – to “be there!” Here are some ideas for how you can build the support assets for all ages of children and teenagers.

- ☺ Spend as much time as possible holding babies and interacting with them.
- ☺ Say “yes” to children more often than you say “no”.
- ☺ Get down to children’s eye level whenever you interact with them.
- ☺ Play with children, letting them choose what you do.
- ☺ Encourage children’s passions and interests.
- ☺ Answer their questions. If you don’t know, admit it and work together to find out the answer.
- ☺ Be available to listen.
- ☺ Affirm independence and interdependence. People need each other.
- ☺ Ask teenagers for their opinion or advice.

27% of young people surveyed by the Search Institute say their parents & other adults model positive, responsible behavior.

Internal Assets - COMMITMENT-TO-LEARNING

The 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.

- **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.

How You Can Build the COMMITMENT-TO-LEARNING Assets:

Young children are naturally curious. Turning this natural curiosity into a lifelong commitment to learning is critical for young people’s success in life. In an age of technology and rapid change, young people must learn not only facts and information, but they must learn how to learn. If young people enjoy learning, are naturally curious, and have skills to help them learn, then they’ll be much more able to master almost anything throughout their lives. Here are ideas for how you can build the commitment-to-learning assets for all ages of children and teenagers.

- ☺ Sing and read to babies every day.
- ☺ Make up a game or song for children that teaches them the names of objects.
- ☺ Visit libraries, zoos, museums – any place that gives children new experiences.
- ☺ Set daily homework guidelines for children and provide a place for them to study.
- ☺ Let children read to you every day as they learn to read.
- ☺ Find creative ways to help young people link their interests with school subjects (such as doing special projects)
- ☺ Ask young people to teach you a new skill or about a subject they’re studying in school.

Newsletter resources:

www.search-institute.org

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