

The 40 Developmental Assets of Positive Youth Development

Why do some kids grow up with ease, while others struggle? Why do some kids get involved in dangerous activities, while others spend their time contributing to society? The Search Institute has identified 40 concrete qualities - developmental assets - that have a tremendous influence on youth's lives and choices. Research shows that the 40 Developmental Assets help youth make wise decisions, choose positive paths, and grow up competent, caring and responsible. (See: <http://search-institute.org>)

Asset Category	Asset Type	Description
Support	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 parent(s).
	Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.
	Caring neighbourhood	Young person experiences caring neighbours.
	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	Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
	Youth as resources	Youth 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, at school and in the neighbourhood.
Boundaries and Expectations	Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
	School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.
	Neighbourhood boundaries	Neighbours take responsibility for monitoring youth's behaviour
	Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behaviour
	Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behaviour
	High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
Constructive Use of Time	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 community organizations.
	Religious community	Young person spends one hour or more 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.

Asset Category	Asset Type	Description
Commitment to Learning	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	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	Planning and decision making	Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
	Interpersonal competence	Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
	Cultural competence	Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds.
	Resistance skills	Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
	Peaceful conflict resolution	Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
Positive Identity	Personal power	Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
	Self-esteem	Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
	Sense of purpose	Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
	Positive view of personal future	Young person is optimistic about her or his future.

**The 40 Assets provide a framework for action; to engage sectors that can affect positive youth development and is the expressed intent from the Search Institute. The list of assets should not be considered prescriptive in nature. The list represents a synthesis of exhaustive research as some, not all of, the determinants for youth health. It does not purport to prescribe one religion over another or one activity over another. The research indicates correlative reasoning, while having extreme limitations in causative determinants.