

40 Developmental Assets

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



		Name and Definition
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- communicates positively with parent(s). 3. Other Adult Relationships- receives support from 3or more non-parent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood- 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 to succeed in school.
	EMPOWERMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community Values Youth- perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources- is given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others- serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety- feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family Boundaries-family has clear rules and consequences and monitors 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- best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative Activities- spends 3+ hrs/wk in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs- spends 3+ hrs/wk in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community- spends 1 or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home- is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.
Internal Assets	COMMITMENT TO LEARNING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation- is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement- is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework- reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School- cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure- reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	POSITIVE VALUES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring- places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice- places high value on equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity- acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty- "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility- accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint- believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	SOCIAL COMPETENCIES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and Decision Making- knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence- has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence- has knowledge/comfort with different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills- can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution- seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	POSITIVE IDENTITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal Power- feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem- reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose- reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future- is optimistic about her or his personal future

Are assets important for young people of all races/ethnicities?

YES!

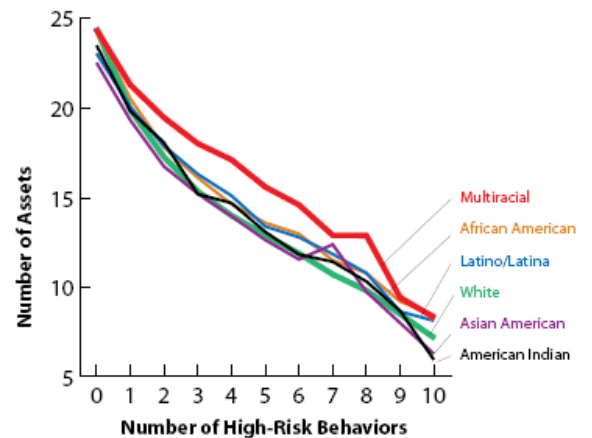
New Search Institute research shows that African American, American Indian, Asian American, Latino, White, and Multiracial youth all benefit similarly from experiencing more of assets in their lives, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Analyses of 217,277 6th- to 12th-grade youth (including 69,731 youth of color) surveyed in 318 U.S. communities during the found the following:

- ▶ youth from all racial/ethnic groups with a high number of Assets had a lower rate of engaging in high-risk behaviors (*violence, alcohol use, and illicit drug use*).
- ▶ Developmental assets promote thriving behaviors (*valuing diversity, and succeeding in school*) among all racial/ethnic groups.

Risks and Assets, by Race/Ethnicity

On average, young people with more developmental assets engage in fewer high-risk behaviors (out of 10 that are measured) than youth with fewer assets.



SOURCE: Search Institute surveys of 217,277 6th- to 12th-grade youth during the 1999–2000 school year.

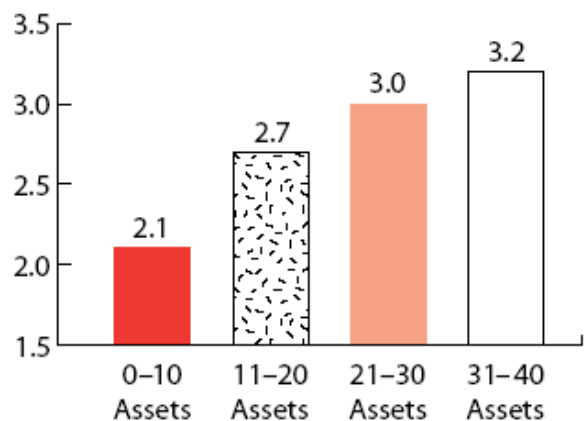
Can YMCA programs that promote assets help youth succeed in school?

YES!

Studies suggest that developmental assets play a significant role in students' academic achievement. In fact, developmental assets appear to have as much or more influence on student achievement as other demographic factors and school reform strategies. Here is what we know:

- ▶ The higher students' asset levels, the higher their current GPA.
- ▶ Students' asset levels are twice as important in predicting achievement as demographic factors such as gender, family composition, socioeconomic status, or race/ethnicity.
- ▶ Students whose levels of developmental assets remained stable or increased had significantly higher GPAs three years later than students who declined in their assets.
- ▶ Students from all racial/ethnic backgrounds with high levels of assets (31–40) are about five to 12 times as likely as those with few assets (0–10) to be successful in school.

Average GPA* by Levels of Assets



*4.0 grade point scale.

N = 325 6th- to 12th-grade students in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, 1998.



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