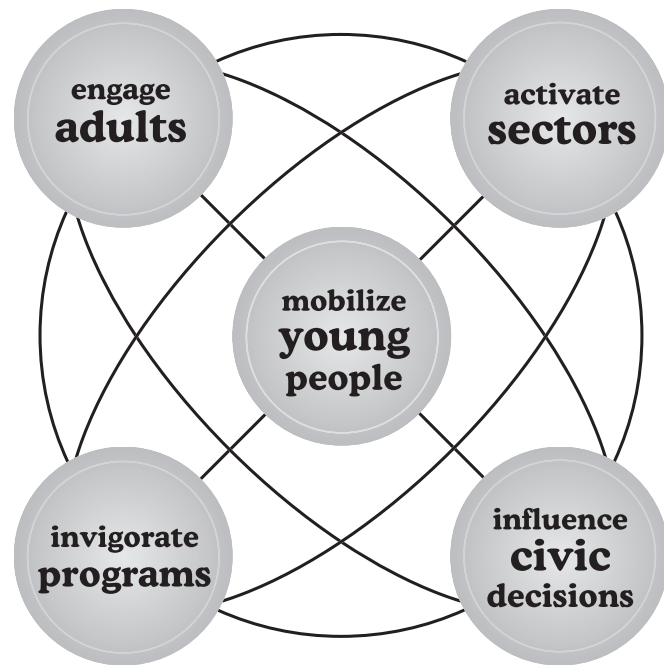


## The Five Action Strategies

### Five Action Strategies for Transforming Communities and Society Creating a World Where All Young People Are Valued and Thrive

The Five Action Strategies provide a practical approach to identifying, encouraging, and linking all the important people, places, activities, and programs necessary for a powerful collective effort. As initiatives work to strengthen relationships within and between these spheres of influence across the community, they build a web of interconnected efforts that support one another. Long-lasting success happens by merging the asset-building capacities of all community members where the lives of adults and youth intersect. It takes the combination of all five Action Strategies to make lasting positive change.



#### Engage Adults

Engage adults from all walks of life to develop sustained, strength-building relationships with children and adolescents, both within families and in neighborhoods.

#### Mobilize Young People

Mobilize young people to use their power as asset builders and change agents.

#### Activate Sectors

Activate all sectors of the community—such as schools, faith-based organizations, youth, businesses, human services, and health-care organizations—to create an asset-building culture and to contribute fully to young people’s healthy development.

#### Invigorate Programs

Invigorate, expand, and enhance programs to become more asset rich and to be available to and accessed by all children and youth.

#### Influence Civic Decisions

Influence decision makers and opinion leaders to leverage financial, media, and policy resources in support of this positive transformation of communities and society.

## Contact Us!

If you would like more information on a specific topic, please call, write, or visit our Web site. Our business hours are 8:30 am–5:00 pm (CST), Monday through Friday.

Mail: **Search Institute**  
**615 First Avenue NE, Suite 125, Minneapolis, MN 55413**

Phone: **877-240-7251**

Fax: **612-692-5553**

Web site: [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)



practical and inspiring resources to create a world where all young people are valued and thrive!

## Search Institute®—Who We Are

### Our Mission

Search Institute is an independent, nonprofit, nonsectarian organization whose mission is to provide leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth and communities. To accomplish this mission, the institute generates, synthesizes, and communicates new knowledge, convenes organizational and community leaders, and works with state and national organizations to support the healthy development of children and adolescents.

### Areas of Work

Search Institute engages in the following areas of work:

- **Research and Evaluation**  
Conducting applied research and evaluation on positive child and adolescent development as well as comprehensive profiles and evaluations of youth to help assess Developmental Assets in youth, programs, and communities.
- **Resources**  
Producing a wide range of publications and practical tools for asset building to help promote, practice, and cultivate positive child and adolescent development. A full line of printed and downloadable publications is available at [www.search-institute.org/catalog](http://www.search-institute.org/catalog)
- **Community, Organization, and Agency Support**  
Linking nearly 600 city, county, and statewide *Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth*® (HC•HY) initiatives across North America and the world through online bulletin boards, listservs, HC•HY Conferences, and other gatherings. Working with youth-serving organizations and schools to enhance the effectiveness of their youth engagement efforts. Offering strategic coaching and consulting as well as telephone technical assistance to support and learn from others.
- **Training**  
Providing education and training on asset building to empower and equip individuals as well as organizations to become asset builders in work and in daily life. *Vision Training Associates* is the sole provider of all Search Institute training events.
- **Survey Services**  
Providing a growing array of surveys to help communities, organizations, schools, and individuals better understand the needs and strengths of their youth.

Search  
Institute's  
Vision:

A World  
Where All  
Young People  
Are Valued  
and Thrive



The following are trademarks of Search Institute:  
*Search Institute*®, *Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth*®, and *Developmental Assets*®.

## About Developmental Assets®

### The Developmental Assets Framework

At the heart of the institute’s work is the framework of 40 Developmental Assets, which are positive experiences, relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. Created in the 1990s, the framework is grounded in research on child and adolescent development, risk prevention, and resiliency.

Assets are easy to build! Asset building is about *relationships*—anyone can do it. You can make a difference and help a young person succeed!

## About Developmental Assets *(continued from front)*

### The Importance of Assets

Search Institute's research shows that the more assets young people have, the less likely they are to engage in risky behaviors. In addition, these common themes about the importance of assets have emerged from numerous findings:

- **Assets promote academic success.**
- **Assets divert youth from risky behaviors and increase civic engagement.**
- **Assets give young people the strengths they need to make positive choices in life.**
- **Across the United States—in big cities and small towns—most young people now experience fewer than half of the 40 Developmental Assets.**

### Building Assets in Your Community

We've included some resources in this packet to help you and your community get started with intentional asset building. Some of the basics are:

- **Learn** more about the 40 Developmental Assets and the communities that have already built successful initiatives. Search Institute's Web site is a great source for information about published resources, trainings, and events: [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)
- **Share** the message of asset building. Talk to PTA groups, civic organizations, neighbors, congregation members, realtors, businesses, student clubs—anyone interested in the youth in your community.
- **Gather** together a group of people, including young people, who are willing to go deeper with assets. Develop a vision of what your community would look like if Developmental Assets were being nurtured throughout the community.

*Change is possible, and the power rests in the people and places of community that join together to embrace, invest in, and engage with young people.*

— Peter Benson, Ph.D.  
President of Search Institute

## The Power of Assets

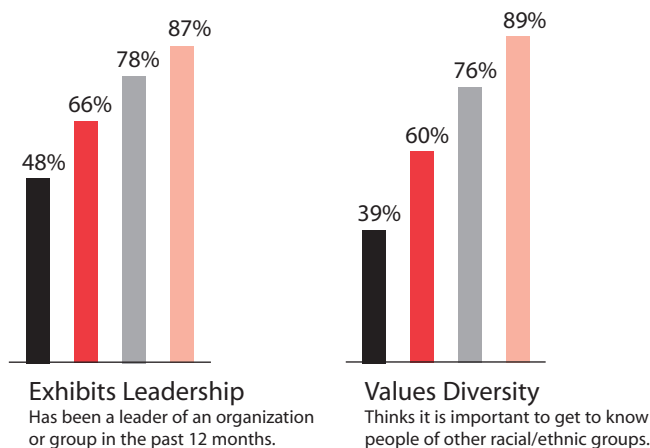
### Research Findings

On one level, the 40 Developmental Assets represent common wisdom about the kinds of positive experiences and characteristics that young people need and deserve. But their value extends further. Surveys of almost 150,000 students in grades 6–12 reveal that assets are powerful influences on adolescent behavior. Regardless of gender, ethnic heritage, economic situation, or geographic location, assets both promote positive behaviors and attitudes and help protect young people from many different problem behaviors.

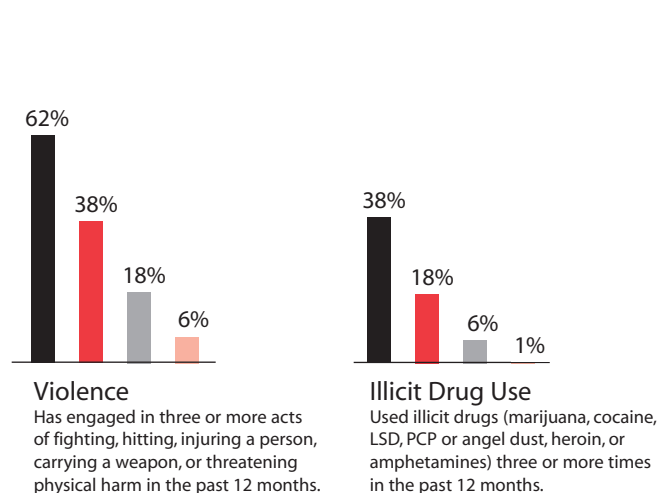
To illustrate, these graphs show that young people with more assets are less likely to engage in patterns of high-risk behavior and more likely to report having positive attitudes and behaviors.

Key: ■ 0–10 assets ■ 11–20 assets ■ 21–30 assets ■ 31–40 assets

#### Promoting Positive Behaviors and Attitudes



#### Protecting Youth From High-Risk Behaviors



Source: *The Asset Approach: 40 Elements of Healthy Development*.  
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## The 40 Developmental Assets® for Grades 6–12

### The 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 parent(s).
- 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, at 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 community organizations.
- 19 **Religious community** • Young person spends one hour or more 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.

### The 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.

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