



Boundaries and Expectations Category of Developmental Assets

Learning the difference between right and wrong

Boundaries are important to young people because they give clear messages about what's expected. By the same token, caring adults who expect young people to do their best help them to learn good judgment. Every day young people face many options and choices. Boundaries and expectations provide young people with the support they need to choose wisely.

Here are the facts

Research shows that the more young people have clear, consistent boundaries and high expectations, the more likely they are to grow up healthy. Search Institute has identified six assets in the Boundaries and Expectations category that are crucial for helping young people succeed: Family Boundaries, School Boundaries, Neighborhood Boundaries, Adult Role Models, Positive Peer Influence, and High Expectations.

Tips for building these assets

Start with your own self-awareness: Are you self-disciplined? What are your expectations for yourself? What was expected of you when you were young? By considering these questions, you'll be better prepared to talk with young people about them. Modeling responsible behavior is important when establishing boundaries and expectations. Provide clear messages, appropriate consequences, and realistic expectations.

Also try this

In your home and family: Involve your child in family meetings to discuss family rules and what happens when the boundaries are violated. Compare with boundaries in other places where your child spends time, and work to provide consistency.

In your neighborhood and community: Practice responsible behavior at all times to help young people understand why it's important. Make a point to monitor the behavior of all young people you come in contact with—not just your own children.

In your school or youth program: Work with young people to set boundaries and rules within your school or program. Post a written set of rules in visible places: hallways, classrooms, lunchroom, or a gymnasium.

Want to know more about Search Institute's other seven asset categories or the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them? Visit www.search-institute.org/assets.

Developmental Assets[®] are positive factors within young people, families, communities, schools, and other settings that research has found to be important in promoting the healthy development of young people.

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