



Internal Developmental Assets

Trust their judgment and they will too

Young people are wonderful to be around. Not only do we have the opportunity to watch them grow up and mature, their words and actions often inspire and motivate us to be better people as well. But spending time with young people can also be frustrating, especially if you feel like the lessons you're teaching and the values you're trying to instill are falling on deaf ears. Be patient. Part of growing up is learning to be your own person with your own goals, dreams, values, and beliefs. By creating a supportive and caring foundation, you can allow the young people around you to do and be their best.

Here are the facts

Research shows that young people need to internalize certain values, skills, and beliefs to embrace, enjoy, and contribute to the world around them. Search Institute has identified the following internal assets as crucial for helping young people grow up healthy: Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity.

Tips for building these assets

Young people learn by example and repetition. Model and explain how your own behavior upholds the values and beliefs you—and your family—have. Encourage a lifetime commitment to learning by reading, attending lectures, and supporting education. Instill positive values by caring for others, and being honest and responsible. Develop social skills by interacting with a variety of people in different situations. Finally, help young people develop positive identities by allowing opportunities for them to hold leadership positions.

Also try this

In your home and family: Regularly give your child jobs and responsibilities to grow her or his own competencies, including projects around the house and service and educational projects. Take turns planning activities to do as a family.

In your neighborhood and community: Make a point to participate in intergenerational activities with extended family and other neighborhood adults and families.

In your school or youth program: Work with parents, teachers, board members, students, and others to create a list of shared values for your school or youth program. Post the values and integrate them into lesson planning, external communications, and rules.

Want to know more about 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.

From *Instant Assets: 52 Short and Simple E-Mails for Sharing the Asset Message*. Copyright © 2007 by Search Institute®, 877-240-7251; www.search-institute.org. This message may be reproduced for educational, non-commercial uses only (with this copyright line). All rights reserved.