



Positive Values Category of Developmental Assets

You are what you believe

Values shape young people's relationships, behaviors, choices, and sense of who they are. Although positive values help young people avoid risky behavior, they also help guide their day-to-day actions and interactions. Thus, values inspire, not just prohibit. Young people who have positive values are more likely to listen to their conscience, help others, be independent, tell right from wrong, and feel happy. Ultimately, positive values help young people make their own decisions rather than imitate friends or follow trends.

Here are the facts

Research shows the more young people develop positive values that guide their behavior, the more likely they are to grow up healthy. Search Institute has identified six assets in the Positive Values category that are crucial for helping young people succeed: Caring, Equality and Social Justice, Integrity, Honesty, Responsibility, and Restraint.

Tips for building these assets

Clarifying values is critical as young people explore who they are and who they want to be. You can't choose young people's values for them, but you can help shape the values they choose by talking about and modeling values important to you. Present young people with consistent messages about the values you wish to instill.

Also try this

In your home and family: Make a list of the 10 values most important to you and your family. Find ways to help your child understand, demonstrate, and internalize these values.

In your neighborhood and community: Young people learn by observing the adults around them. Think about how you act. Actions reveal true values, so strive to model the behavior you want young people to imitate.

In your school or youth program: Create a list of shared values with students or group members. Talk about what it takes to uphold these values.

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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