



PROMOTING CHARACTER BUILDING ASSETS in our YOUTH

Ideas for HOME

(Months = Indicates when the schools emphasize assets in that category.)



COMMITMENT TO LEARNING – Sept/May

Developing an internal intellectual curiosity and the skills to gain new knowledge is essential for both school and work success. The commitment to learning assets reflect how connected young people are to their schools, how motivated they are to achieve, and whether they express their curiosity and work ethic in homework and reading for fun.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Stay in contact with teachers about your children’s progress. Don’t wait for report cards.
- Help your child stay alert in school by ensuring that they eat well and get enough sleep.
- Monitor homework. Don’t hover, but check in with your child every so often and ask “How’s it going?”
- Encourage your child to participate in activities that boost school spirit.
- Limit television watching.
- Encourage your kids to do the best at school, but don’t expect perfection, and leave room for mistakes.
- Make it a point to attend school conferences and special events.
- Provide a quiet, comfortable, well-lit place for your kids to study without distractions.
- Together with your child, set boundaries about interruptions.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME – Dec/Jul/Aug

Healthy communications provide a rich array of constructive after-school opportunities. Whether through schools, community organizations, congregations, or for-profit centers, structured activities stimulate positive growth and contribute to the development of the other assets.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Show your support by attending your children’s performances.
- Start or join a car pool for kids who participate in extracurricular activities.
- Incorporate faith and spirituality into your daily life.
- Monitor where your children go and who they’re with, even when they’re teenagers.
- Make time at home fun for everyone. Spend time together doing things you all enjoy. Play favorite games, have a video night, read, take walks or ride bikes.
- Encourage your child to get involved with the arts.
- Set a good example by getting involved with a team, club, or organization that interests you.
- Volunteer to lead or assist with a religion class for young people.
- Limit the amount of time your children spend at home alone. Plan to be home with them as much as possible. Sit down to dinner together. Be available to help with homework or just talk.

SUPPORT - Oct

Support assets refer to the ways in which children are loved, and accepted. Children experience a lot of support not only in their families but also from many people in a variety of settings, such as in schools or religious congregations, among extended family, within the family’s social network, and in other areas in which socialization occurs.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Eat at least one meal together every day.
- Be your children’s biggest fan.
- Ask your child’s opinion or advice about something important.
- Take family vacations with other families.
- Get to know your children’s friends. Welcome them into your home.
- Get to know five kids in your neighborhood.
- Thank your children’s teacher for the good work they do.

POSITIVE IDENTITY - Jan

This category focuses on young people’s views of themselves—their own sense of agency, purpose, worth, and promise. Without a positive sense of who they are, youth may feel powerless, without a sense of initiative and direction.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Involve children of all ages in family decision making.
- Give kids age-appropriate choices at all stages of their lives.
- Express your love of your children regularly and often. Show them and tell them every day how much they mean to you.
- Listen to your children when they talk to you about their dreams. Get excited with them. Ask how you can help.
- Inspire hope by being hopeful, optimism by being optimistic. Look forward to your future and the future of your family with joyful anticipation.

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES - Mar

These assets are important personal and interpersonal skills youth need to negotiate the maze of choices, options, and relationships they face. These skills also lay the foundation for independence and competence as adults.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Allow for mistakes. Don’t blow up at a poor choice and don’t rescue your child from consequences.
- Invite people over for dinner often. Spend time as a family talking with you guests.
- Go as a family to events that celebrate different cultures and religions. Talk about them afterward.
- Talk to your children about peer pressure. Share stories from your own childhood and teen years

EMPOWERMENT – Nov/Apr

The empowerment assets focus on community perceptions of youth & the opportunities they have to contribute to society in meaningful ways; the need to feel safe & valued.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Attend community events as a family.
- Have a family meeting and get everyone’s ideas on accomplishing household tasks. Share the decisions and share the work.
- Be a role model for your children by serving others.
- Walk or drive your child’s friends home after dark even if they live nearby.
- Keep track of all family members’ whereabouts and plans. Let each other know about changes.
- Set aside two hours one weekend for serving others as a family.
- Work with your neighbors to address safety needs and concerns in the neighborhood.

POSITIVE VALUES - Feb

Positive values are important “internal compasses” that guide young people’s priorities and choices. Although there are many values that American society cherishes and seeks to nurture in youth, the asset framework focuses on several widely shared values that affect youth behavior.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Establish an atmosphere of mutual caring and helpfulness within your home.
- Volunteer with your family at a soup kitchen, homeless shelters, or food pantry. Join marches and demonstrations for equality and social justice.
- Celebrate when your child acts on a belief of conviction, especially when it is obviously hard to do.
- Never punish your kids for being honest with you.
- Recognize and affirm your child’s responsible Behavior

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS - Jun

Clear and consistent boundaries complement support and empowerment. Ideally, young people experience boundary assets in the family, at school, in after-school programs, and in the neighborhood. They provide a set of consistent messages about appropriate behavior and expectations across socializing contexts.

How To Promote Assets in this category:

- Have a family calendar on which all family members note where they will be and when.
- Get involved in a parent-teacher policy organization.
- Talk with your children about neighborhood boundaries.
- Be involved in your child’s life on a daily basis.
- Resist the urge to criticize friendships that seem negative.