

# Our History, Our Future

*A Celebration of Asset-Building  
in the YMCA Movement*



Y M C A  
150 years  
1851-2001



We build strong kids, strong families,  
strong communities.

YMCA of the USA

# Our History, Our Future

*A Celebration of Asset-Building  
in the YMCA Movement*



YMCA of the USA  
Chicago, Illinois

©2001 by the YMCA of the USA

with the exception of the frameworks of developmental assets that are the basis for this publication and which are being used under a license from Search Institute, Minneapolis.

©1997 by Search Institute.

For more information visit the Web site, [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org).

Produced by the YMCA of the USA, Chicago, Kenneth L. Gladish, Ph.D., National Executive, and in collaboration with Search Institute, Minneapolis, Peter L. Benson, Ph.D., President.

Funded by the Executive Office of the YMCA of the USA.

Project Director: Carmelita Gallo, YMCA of the USA

Writer and Researcher: Jolene Roehlkepartain, Ideas Ink, St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Editor and Writer: Celeste Wroblewski, YMCA of the USA

Research Consultant: Dagmar Getz, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries

Asset Development Consultants: Mary Ackerman and Gene Roehlkepartain, Search Institute

Design and Composition: Bert VanderMark and Elaine Coder, Studio Montage, St. Louis, Missouri

Fact-checker: Brenda Welker, YMCA of the USA

Proofreader: Elizabeth Fleck, YMCA of the USA

Sources for the historical background and photos include

the Kautz Family YMCA Archives;

*History of the YMCA in North America*, by C. Howard Hopkins;

*Proud Heritage: A History in Pictures of the YMCA in the United States*, by Andrea Hinding;

the Research and Planning department of the YMCA of the USA;

YMCA yearbooks and statistical reports of YMCA work in the United States and Canada from 1876 to the present;

and past issues of *Discovery YMCA* magazine, YMCA of the USA.

Thanks to Camille Fron and Mary Filiatraut of the YMCA of the USA for help in reproducing photos.

**A version of this publication can be viewed and downloaded at the YMCA of the USA's public Web site, [www.ymca.net](http://www.ymca.net).**

On the password-protected YMCA Intranet, [www.ymcausa.org](http://www.ymcausa.org), staff and volunteers of local YMCAs will find complementary information, including text that they may download and adapt for local, not-for-profit, and YMCA mission-related work (as specified on the Intranet).

*All rights reserved. This document may not be reproduced by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, taping, or information storage and retrieval systems—without prior written permission of the YMCA of the USA and Search Institute. Member Associations of the National Council of YMCAs of the United States may contact the Office of the General Counsel for permission to reproduce.*

# Contents

Introduction: The YMCAs' Commitment to Asset-Building . . .	4	A Commitment to Instill Positive Values . . . . .	20
The Eight Categories . . . . .	5	Caring ( <i>Asset 26</i> ) . . . . .	20
Forming a New Alliance . . . . .	6	Equality and Social Justice ( <i>Asset 27</i> ) . . . . .	20
Developmental Assets for All Ages . . . . .	6	Integrity ( <i>Asset 28</i> ) . . . . .	21
<b>A Commitment to Ensure That Young People</b>		Honesty ( <i>Asset 29</i> ) . . . . .	21
<b>Experience Support . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>	YMCA Core Values and Assets . . . . .	21
Family Support ( <i>Asset 1</i> ) . . . . .	7	Responsibility ( <i>Asset 30</i> ) . . . . .	22
Positive Family Communication ( <i>Asset 2</i> ) . . . . .	7	Healthy Lifestyle and Restraint ( <i>Asset 31</i> ) . . . . .	22
Other Adult Relationships ( <i>Asset 3</i> ) . . . . .	8	<b>A Commitment to Develop Social Competencies . . . . .</b>	<b>23</b>
Caring Neighborhoods ( <i>Asset 4</i> ) . . . . .	8	Planning and Decision Making ( <i>Asset 32</i> ) . . . . .	23
Caring Climate in Schools and Other Settings ( <i>Asset 5</i> ) . . . . .	9	Interpersonal Competence ( <i>Asset 33</i> ) . . . . .	23
Parent Involvement in Schools and Other Settings ( <i>Asset 6</i> ) . . . . .	9	Cultural Competence ( <i>Asset 34</i> ) . . . . .	23
<b>A Commitment to Provide Opportunities</b>		Resistance Skills ( <i>Asset 35</i> ) . . . . .	24
<b>for Empowerment . . . . .</b>	<b>10</b>	Peaceful Conflict Resolution ( <i>Asset 36</i> ) . . . . .	24
Community Values Children and Youth ( <i>Asset 7</i> ) . . . . .	10	<b>A Commitment to Nurture a Positive Identity . . . . .</b>	<b>25</b>
Children and Youth as Resources ( <i>Asset 8</i> ) . . . . .	10	Personal Power ( <i>Asset 37</i> ) . . . . .	25
Service to Others ( <i>Asset 9</i> ) . . . . .	11	Self-Esteem ( <i>Asset 38</i> ) . . . . .	26
Safety ( <i>Asset 10</i> ) . . . . .	11	Sense of Purpose ( <i>Asset 39</i> ) . . . . .	26
<b>A Commitment to Set Appropriate Boundaries</b>		Positive View of Personal Future ( <i>Asset 40</i> ) . . . . .	26
<b>and Expectations . . . . .</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Timeline: Asset-Building in the YMCA Movement . . . . .</b>	<b>28</b>
Family Boundaries ( <i>Asset 11</i> ) . . . . .	12	<b>Important Next Steps: A Worksheet . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>
School and Out-of-Home Boundaries ( <i>Asset 12</i> ) . . . . .	12	<b>Asset Charts</b>	
Neighborhood Boundaries ( <i>Asset 13</i> ) . . . . .	13	40 Assets Infants Need to Succeed	
Adult Role Models ( <i>Asset 14</i> ) . . . . .	13	(Birth to 12 Months) . . . . .	32
Positive Peer Interaction and Influence ( <i>Asset 15</i> ) . . . . .	14	40 Assets Toddlers Need to Succeed	
High Expectations ( <i>Asset 16</i> ) . . . . .	14	(Ages 13 to 35 Months) . . . . .	33
<b>A Commitment to Facilitate Constructive Use of Time . . . . .</b>	<b>15</b>	40 Assets Preschoolers Need to Succeed	
Creative Activities ( <i>Asset 17</i> ) . . . . .	15	(Ages 3 to 5 Years) . . . . .	34
Child and Youth Programs ( <i>Asset 18</i> ) . . . . .	15	40 Assets Elementary-School-Age Children Need	
Religious Community ( <i>Asset 19</i> ) . . . . .	16	to Succeed (Ages 6 to 11 Years) . . . . .	35
Positive, Supervised Time at Home ( <i>Asset 20</i> ) . . . . .	16	40 Assets Middle- and High-School-Age Youth Need	
<b>A Commitment to Cultivate a Lifelong Commitment</b>		to Succeed (Ages 12 to 18 Years) . . . . .	36
<b>to Learning . . . . .</b>	<b>18</b>		
Achievement Expectation and Motivation ( <i>Asset 21</i> ) . . . . .	18		
Learning and School Engagement ( <i>Asset 22</i> ) . . . . .	18		
Stimulating Activities and Homework ( <i>Asset 23</i> ) . . . . .	18		
Enjoyment of Learning and Bonding to School ( <i>Asset 24</i> ) . . . . .	19		
Reading for Pleasure ( <i>Asset 25</i> ) . . . . .	19		

# Introduction: The YMCAs' Commitment to Asset-Building

*“The asset-based approach confirms the historical experience of the best YMCAs—it speaks to the heart of YMCA membership and programs.”*

Ken Gladish,  
National Executive Director,  
YMCA of the USA

Inspired by the first YMCA's founding in London, England, in 1844, the first YMCAs in North America were founded in 1851, with a YMCA opening in Montreal in November and another in Boston four weeks later. From their very beginnings, the U.S. and Canadian YMCA movements both took a positive approach toward their work—their essential nature has always been to protect and prevent, rather than to react and reform.

YMCAs continue to take a positive approach to the way they work with kids, families, and communities. Moreover, this approach has been validated by research conducted by Search Institute, based in Minneapolis. Studies by Search show that in order to grow up to be healthy, caring, and competent adults, young people need a sufficient number of “developmental assets” in their lives. Developmental assets include things such as healthy relationships with adults, service to others, creative activities, honesty, peaceful conflict resolution, self-esteem, and more. Through surveys of more than one million young people, Search found that the more assets they have, the more likely they are to become caring, competent, responsible adults and the less likely they are to lose their way and get into trouble.

Drawing from the Kautz Family YMCA Archives, this monograph, *Our History, Our Future: A Celebration of Asset-Building in the YMCA Movement*, aims to highlight just some of the ways YMCAs have been building assets throughout their existence. It is celebratory and anecdotal, and by no means comprehensive; for every example of asset-building that is cited, there are hundreds, thousands, and even millions of others that one could find in the YMCA history books and in the contemporary work of YMCAs across the continent.

This monograph also aims to inspire. Invigorated by Search Institute's validation of their efforts, U.S. and Canadian YMCAs are now approaching youth development even more systematically and deliberately. They are integrating asset-building into every phase (from planning to implementation to evaluation to fundraising) of every youth program and into their operations overall. For the good of all kids in all communities, we hope that this piece inspires many more YMCAs and other kindred groups to do the same.

**Carmelita Gallo**, Director, Association Resources,  
June 2001

For every example of asset-building that is cited, there are hundreds, thousands, and even millions of others that one could find in the YMCA history books and in the contemporary work of YMCAs.



YMCA camping,  
circa 1930s. ▶

## The Eight Categories

The 40 developmental assets are organized into eight categories, listed below. In committing to build developmental assets, YMCAs in the United States and Canada commit to do the following—and to encourage and support kids, families, and communities in doing the same:

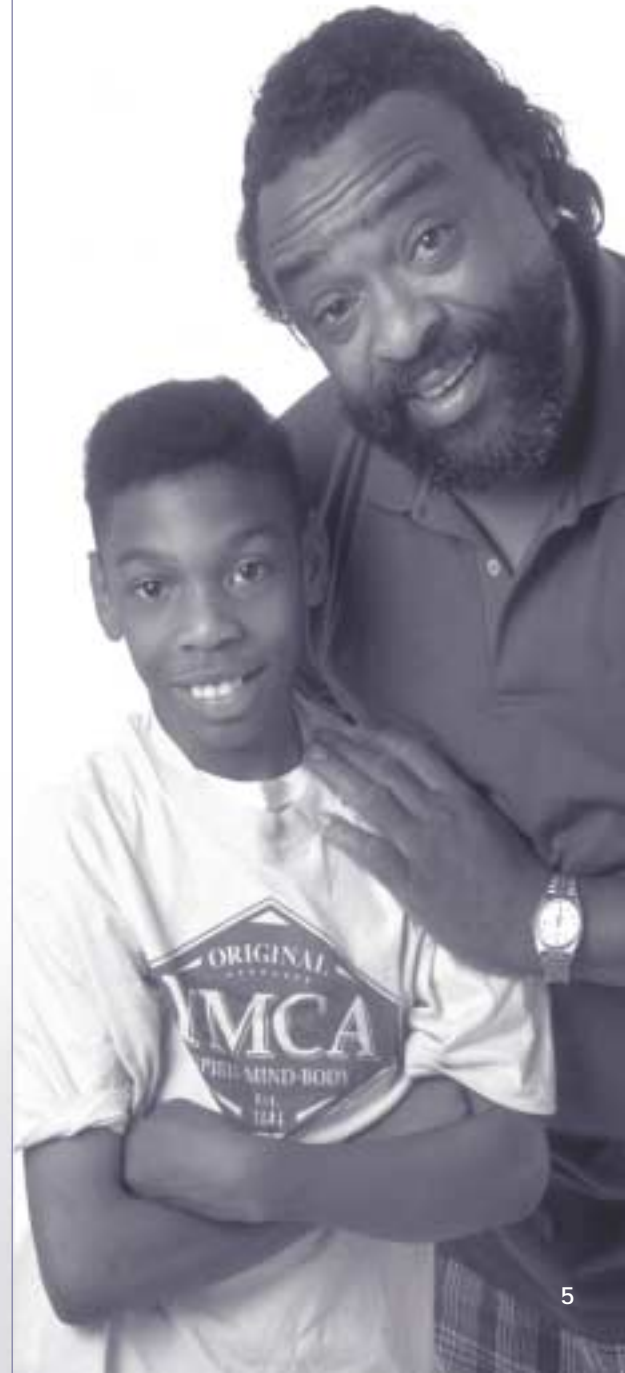
- ▶ **Ensure That Young People Experience Support**
- ▶ **Provide Opportunities for Empowerment**
- ▶ **Set Appropriate Boundaries and Expectations**
- ▶ **Facilitate Constructive Use of Time**
- ▶ **Cultivate a Lifelong Commitment to Learning**
- ▶ **Instill Positive Values**
- ▶ **Develop Social Competencies**
- ▶ **Nurture a Positive Identity**

Search Institute's framework of developmental assets was created to emphasize the role that every person and institution in a community plays in raising strong kids. Its original framework and the research behind it were based on the developmental needs of youth in middle school and high school.

In this publication, where we have highlighted ways that YMCAs can build all 40 assets for young people from infancy through adolescence, we have made two types of adjustments:

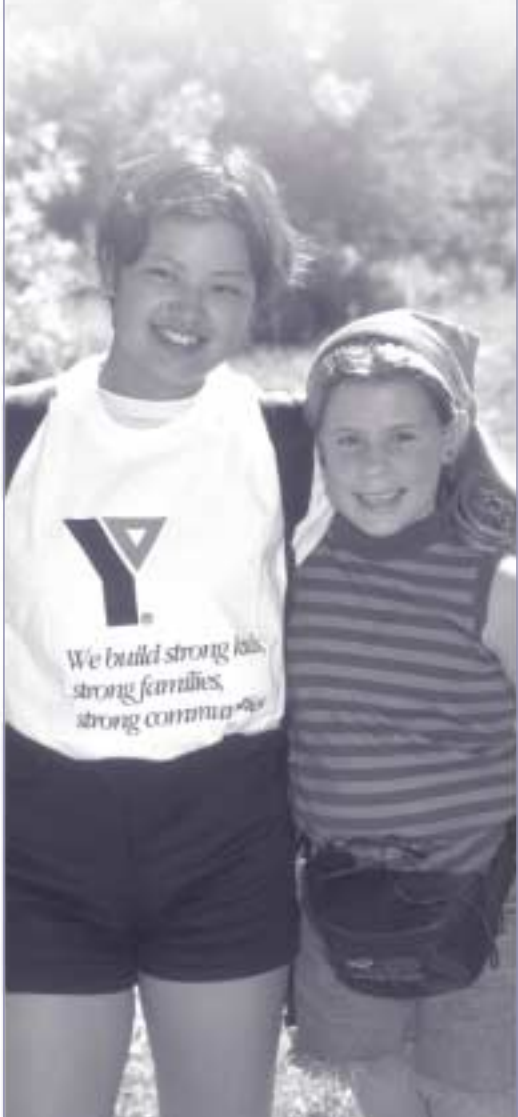
We have broadened the names of the 40 assets in the text to reflect, to a greater degree, the experiences of young people across the first two decades of life. The specific asset names and definitions for each of five age groups (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, elementary-age youth, and high-school-age youth) are included in the charts on pages 32–36.

In providing examples of asset-building in the YMCA movement, we have included some where YMCAs have played a supportive or complementary role in kids' lives, as the primary provider of that asset may be the family or another institution (such as a school or congregation). These examples illustrate the ways YMCAs can be supportive of other institutions and families in their asset-building roles.



*"Our agenda now is to look at each of our branches and see what assets are still needed in each community and to focus on filling that need."*

Rosemary O'Meara,  
Associate Vice President/Branch  
Executive, Downtown Branch,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota.



## Forming a New Alliance

Building upon their long-standing commitment to positive youth development, in 2000, the YMCA movements in the United States and Canada began to envision an alliance with Search Institute. The vision is to surround young people with "abundant assets"—a vibrant, developmental infrastructure that involves not only their YMCA and family, but also the constellation of "small communities" they encounter every day. YMCAs want every young person to experience:

- ▶ meaningful daily relationships with caring adults,
- ▶ programs and activities that stimulate positive growth and development,
- ▶ a set of values for living and clear expectations and boundaries, and
- ▶ opportunities to be of service to others while playing a meaningful role in community life.

By making a deeper commitment to bring out the best in young people and families, YMCAs aim to create stronger, healthier communities where everyone has a voice and everyone has an important contribution to make.

## Developmental Assets for All Ages

Search Institute originally focused its research on the developmental assets for adolescents (young people in grades six to 12). More recently, it has adapted the original framework for young children, birth through age 11. There are five different lists, which appear on pages 32–36. Pick the one that fits the age group you work with.

- ▶ 40 Assets Infants Need to Succeed (Birth to 12 Months) on page 32
- ▶ 40 Assets Toddlers Need to Succeed (Ages 13 to 35 Months) on page 33
- ▶ 40 Assets Preschoolers Need to Succeed (Ages 3 to 5 Years) on page 34
- ▶ 40 Assets Elementary-School-Age Children Need to Succeed (Ages 6 to 11 Years) on page 35
- ▶ 40 Assets Middle- and High-School-Age Youth Need to Succeed (Ages 12 to 18 Years) on page 36

# A Commitment to Ensure That Young People Experience Support

Young people thrive when they experience a lot of support from their families, coaches, instructors, mentors, neighbors, and other caring individuals. They also need positive, asset-rich environments, such as high-quality child-care centers, clubs, schools, recreational activities, and special programs. Six developmental assets (Assets 1-6) make up the category of Support.

## Family Support (Asset 1)

**Today:** YMCAs support families many ways—through child care programs, family activities, prenatal and parent-child exercise classes, infant-parent aquatics classes, resident camp for families, support groups, transitional housing, and more. For example, the YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region in Colorado gives children and families who reside in a Red Cross homeless shelter experiences in horseback riding, boating, ropes courses, and camp activities.

**1974:** An evaluation of a program for parents and first- to third-grade daughters at the Palo Alto YMCA in California finds that using small groups and involving both parents make the program more effective.

**1910:** Sonora Louise Smart founds Father's Day at the Spokane YMCA in Washington on June 6.

**1850s:** Some of the YMCA's earliest forms of family support were free Sunday schools and mission schools for children whose parents were poor.

## Positive Family Communication (Asset 2)

**Today:** Across the United States, 287 YMCAs offer parenting skills training to help family members communicate more effectively. The Casper Family YMCA in Casper, Wyoming, has a parent/child night when families learn communication techniques and have fun together.

**1980:** Family members talk and enjoy each other's company during the annual family pumpkin hunt sponsored by the Waukesha YMCA in Wisconsin.

**1970:** The YMCA movement sets up the Family Communication Skills Center, directed by Winifred Colton.

**1926:** The Y-Indian Guides program for fathers and sons begins at the Richmond Heights branch of the YMCA in St. Louis, Missouri.

**1869:** First "boys' work" starts in Salem, Massachusetts. This signifies the YMCA's entrance into youth work, which will evolve to include work with families.



The first Father's Day was celebrated in Washington at the Spokane YMCA in 1910. This ad is for a 1948 Father's Day event.



### **Other Adult Relationships (Asset 3)**

**Today:** Through Black Achievers and other programs, YMCAs publicly recognize and celebrate caring adults, such as Carl J. Evans, who has been a teacher and coach for 25 years in South Bend, Indiana. He also founded the Oaks Ministry to reach out to young men involved in gangs and drugs.

**1951:** Volunteer leaders receive training on how to be caring leaders to run YMCA programs for 7- to 18-year-olds in Bristol, Tennessee.

**1885:** Sumner F. Dudley organizes and leads a camp for boys at Orange Lake, New Jersey, and says that leaders should be “intimately connected in interest with the boys’ work, and have great influence over the boys themselves.”

**1881:** The boys taught by Ellen Brown in a YMCA night school are so taken by her and her teaching that at the end of the session they ask her to continue her Bible teaching and prayer. She is the first boys’ work secretary (as well as the first female YMCA employee), and she teaches a boys’ class for 21 years.

### **Caring Neighborhoods (Asset 4)**

**Today:** YMCAs are of, by, and for the community. Of the YMCAs throughout the United States, 349 have collaborative programs with neighborhood associations. For example, the YMCA in New Orleans supports a tutoring program at the Redwood Apartment Complex for the children of the residents, most of whom are Hispanic.

**1974:** The Waterbury YMCA in Connecticut identifies neighborhood and institutional resources to meet the needs of 13- to 16-year-olds.

**1858:** The YMCA of Mobile, Alabama, creates a nurturing community by caring for the sick and even regularly hires a doctor to provide medical services.



***Caring Climate in Schools  
and Other Settings  
(Asset 5)***

**Today:** YMCAs pride themselves on creating caring climates for all activities. Two of the fastest growing YMCA programs are school-age child care and full-day toddler care. The Valley of the Sun YMCA, based in Phoenix, is the largest provider of school-age child care in the state of Arizona, and its programs focus on building developmental assets.

**1982:** By this time, 41 percent of YMCAs in the United States offer preschool child care, 35 percent have school-age child care, and 9 percent provide infant child care.

**1859:** The Washington, D.C., YMCA spends \$600 on two buildings to provide care and schooling for children and youth.

***Parent Involvement in Schools  
and Other Settings  
(Asset 6)***

**Today:** YMCAs try to encourage parental involvement in all youth programs. For example, the parent-child “Guides” and “Princesses” program of the Hot Springs Family YMCA in Hot Springs, Arkansas, has a special session to teach parents how to be asset-builders and how to be more involved in all aspects of their children’s lives—at school, at home, and in the community.

**1998:** The YMCA of the USA launches Prime Time Family Time. The Providence YMCA’s Kent County Branch in Rhode Island has families sign in at a special family club room and offers many family-oriented activities.

**1971:** The National Y Program Using Mini-Bikes (NYPUM), a program in collaboration with law enforcement officers, judges, and school officials, emphasizes parent and family involvement.

**1926:** Y-Indian Guides is founded, the first of what will become a host of programs encouraging parents to spend leisure time with their children.

*"The YMCA...faces an opportunity for developing work for the whole family in which each member may find something suited to his own taste and in which together they may share interests common to all."*

Wilhelmina Aveling,  
writing in the YMCA movement’s  
*Journal of Physical Education*,  
March/April 1942.



# A Commitment to Provide Opportunities for Empowerment

**Y**MCA's empower people through meaningful programs and by giving them a say in the planning and implementation of these activities. Empowered young people and families feel good about themselves and their skills. They feel valued—and valuable. Four developmental assets (Assets 7-10) make up the category of Empowerment.

## *Community Values Children and Youth (Asset 7)*

**Today:** Many Y programs offer young people hands-on experience and responsibility. For example, the Youth Service Bureau, a branch of the YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, Indiana, has a TEAM TV Youth Communication Network that offers young people experience in television and media arts projects.

**1968:** The YMCA in Evanston, Illinois, creates a teen drop-in center open on Friday and Saturday nights. It is operated by a teen board that also handles all the finances.

**1930:** Boys under the age of 12 who join the YMCA are now being counted as members.

**1853:** Anthony Bowen, who, in Washington, D.C., founded the first YMCA for African Americans, also is an outspoken advocate for the education of Black children. He convinces Congress to provide public schools for Black children and donates the land himself for the school.

## *Children and Youth as Resources (Asset 8)*

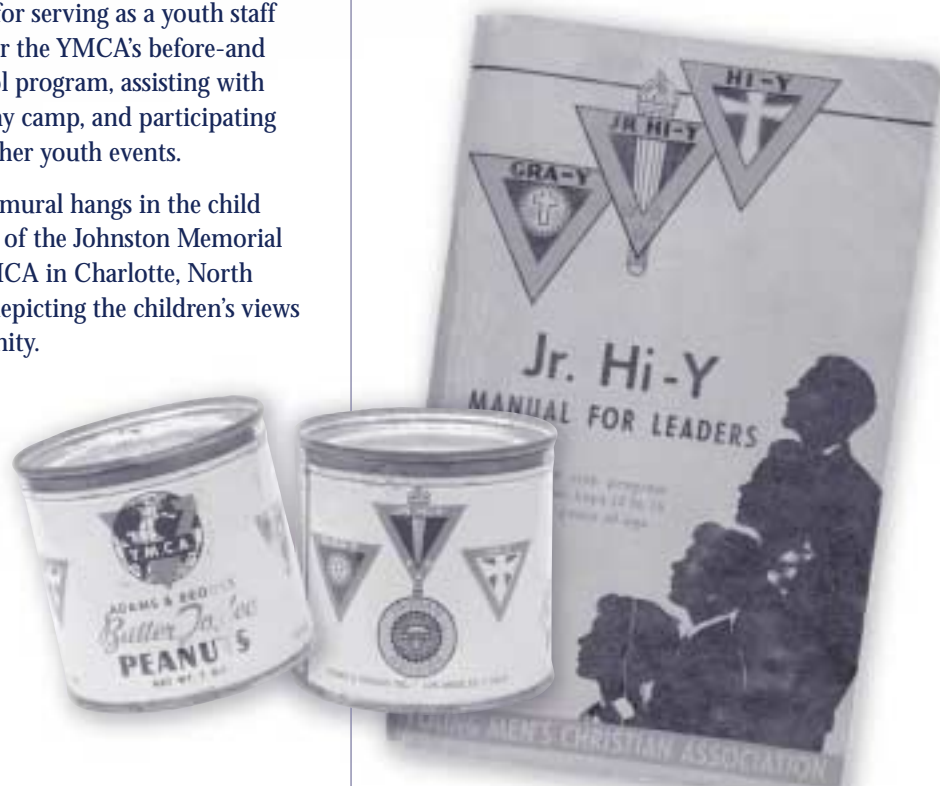
**Today:** YMCAs offer many teen leadership programs such as Leaders Clubs, Hi-Y, Teen Clubs, Black/Minority Achievers, and Earth Service Corps. In Martinsville, Indiana, the Barbara B. Jordan YMCA sponsors a Youth of the Year award. Most recently, Bonnie Minnick, a high school senior, received the award for serving as a youth staff member for the YMCA's before-and after-school program, assisting with summer day camp, and participating in many other youth events.

**1999:** A mural hangs in the child care center of the Johnston Memorial Branch YMCA in Charlotte, North Carolina, depicting the children's views of community.

**1933:** Local YMCAs are challenged to give programs “back” to youth, and most YMCAs begin to do this.

**1914:** The first Native American students' conference is held in Estes Park, Colorado, in June.

**1857:** John Wanamaker, age 19, is the first full-time YMCA employee designated as “corresponding secretary.”



**Service to Others  
(Asset 9)**

**Today:** YMCAs are increasingly integrating service-learning into all programs and operations. Through service-learning, youth and adults develop YMCA program-related skills and knowledge while performing and reflecting upon volunteer service.

**1997:** At the Presidents' Summit for America's Future (which promotes volunteerism on behalf of children and youth), U.S. YMCAs pledge to add 200,000 more volunteers by the year 2001. (They will go on to ultimately exceed their pledge.)

**1942:** YMCA staff work secretly in U.S. internment camps that held 110,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. They set up clubs and camping programs for the children and youth residing there. David Tatsuno, a member of the Japanese YMCA in San Francisco, smuggles a movie camera into the Topaz, Utah, internment camp. His film now is one of two amateur films in the Library of Congress's collection.

**1858:** The Pittsburgh YMCA distributes 30,000 bushels of coal to the unemployed each year for two years.

**Safety  
(Asset 10)**

**Today:** YMCAs are "safe" places where everyone can feel welcomed and cared for. For example, at the "overnighters" of the YMCA of Anchorage, Alaska, 6- to 12-year-olds receive good supervision and partake in activities that are safe and fun. YMCAs also teach safety—three of the five fastest growing YMCA programs are first-aid classes, CPR, and lifeguard training.

**1959:** With the heightened popularity of scuba and skin diving, the YMCA begins teaching safety certification classes to divers.

**1910:** YMCAs begin to add the filtration system to swimming pools, diminishing health concerns about dirty and contaminated water. The world's first indoor filtered pool is built at the Kansas City YMCA in Missouri.

**1881:** Robert J. Roberts of the Boston YMCA in Massachusetts creates new exercises to replace the circus-like gymnastics and heavy stunts of the time. "All exercises should be safe, short, easy, beneficial, and pleasing," he says.

*As one of the more than 5,000 YMCA volunteers who helped give aid to soldiers during the Civil War, he referred to his service as "the greatest privilege and satisfaction...and most profound lesson of my life."*

Walt Whitman,  
American poet



# A Commitment to Set Appropriate Boundries and Expectations

**Y**oung people need to know what's expected of them and to have people and programs that set high expectations for them. They also need clear, consistent messages about what's "in bounds" (such as caring and respecting others) and what's "out of bounds" (such as fighting and using alcohol). Six developmental assets (Assets 11-16) make up the category of Boundaries and Expectations.

## *Family Boundaries (Asset 11)*

**Today:** One way that YMCAs teach families how to set and enforce boundaries is through parenting skills programs. At the YMCA of South Hampton Roads, for example, free six-week parenting classes are held in Norfolk, Virginia. One class is for parents of children ages 6 to 12. Another is for parents of teenagers.

**1981:** The Central YMCA in Wilmington, Delaware, has 20 different parent groups that meet to discuss how to set and enforce boundaries so that their teenagers don't use drugs and alcohol.

**1907:** YMCAs emphasize clean speech, clean athletics, clean living, and service the community not only in their programs, but in the lives of their members.

**1870:** YMCAs frown upon certain inappropriate activities (such as card playing and dancing) and encourage members to refrain from these activities at home as well.

## *School and Out-of-Home Boundaries (Asset 12)*

**Today:** The YMCA of Edmonton, Alberta, staffs a program called Time Out, which is an alternative to out-of-school suspensions, through the Edmonton Public School District. Young people in the program do their homework during program hours and the YMCA provides staff, teaches life skills such as anger management, and creates recreational opportunities. Other Ys offer similar, holistic programs.

**1967:** Day camp counselors at the Northeast District YMCA in Presque Isle, Maine, use various techniques to develop positive attitudes in young people and set guidelines so campers, staff, and parents are informed.

**1914:** The Ragger Society, the forerunner of today's Rags and Leather program, is started. It includes a creed, which became a hymn. It begins like this, "I would be true, for there are those who trust me; I would be pure, for there are those who care."

**1860:** A delegate from Charleston, South Carolina, at the seventh Convention of American YMCAs proposes that YMCAs open gymnasiums to give places for young people to play and "safeguard against the allurements of objectionable places of resort."



### **Neighborhood Boundaries (Asset 13)**

**Today:** Like the YMCA Neighborhood Center at the Fremont Villas Apartments in Las Vegas, YMCAs offer clear boundaries for how young people should behave in their programs, the neighborhood, and the community.

**1978:** The Lincoln YMCA in Nebraska creates camping experiences for juvenile offenders. “This allowed the youth new boundaries to explore yet had the structure and limits needed,” says YMCA leader Bob Furman.

**1896:** The YMCA develops a “Clean Sport Roll” that highlights nine specific boundaries for playing sports on a team (a “small community”). These include showing good sportsmanship, appreciating and respecting others, and not arguing with officials.

**1866:** Henry Ward Beecher gives a stirring speech at the YMCA in Brooklyn, New York, about the importance of discussing appropriate expectations for behavior at the YMCA, in the community, and in society in general. “The whole question has got to be gone over again,” he says.

### **Adult Role Models (Asset 14)**

**Today:** YMCAs want all staff and volunteers to be positive role models. The YMCA of Greater Kansas City, for example, partners with the school district to provide a mentoring program that builds developmental assets for at-risk middle-school students in grades six to eight.

**1971:** Dr. Leo B. Marsh develops the Black Achievers program to motivate young people and to recognize “Black Achievers in industry.”

**1950s:** Baseball Hall of Fame members Jackie Robinson and Roy Campanella play with children at the Jackie Robinson Club at the Harlem YMCA in New York.

**1872:** Richard Cary Morse, the first general secretary of the New York YMCA, was known for “his way with children, a bubbling humor, and a wisdom rising into statesmanship.”



Baseball legend Jackie Robinson with members of the Harlem YMCA, New York, 1948.

*“We’ve developed standards for working with teens across the board, and worked on a manual for advisors who’ll be working with teens.”*

Rebekah Granquist,  
Program Development Director,  
YMCA of San Diego County, California



**Positive Peer Interaction  
and Influence  
(Asset 15)**

**Today:** YMCAs encourage young people to make friends and to influence each other in positive ways. Because friendships are so integral to YMCA work, the YMCA of Greater Des Moines, Iowa, names its day camp “Camp Ses Komee” (camp of friendship).

**1983:** Children in after-school programs at the Greenwood YMCA in South Carolina and the West Volusia YMCA in Deland, Florida, form friendships by being pen pals.

**1936:** The YMCA movement says one of its main programming objectives is the opportunity for boys to find “group fellowship through which they can help one another.”

**1854:** The YMCA in Newark, New Jersey, offers picnics, festivals, fairs, and outings so that members can develop positive friendships with each other.

**High Expectations  
(Asset 16)**

**Today:** Across the United States, 172 YMCAs offer Black Achievers programs, which are for all youth of color. At YMCAs in Chicago and Orlando, Florida, the program is called Black and Hispanics Achievers. In Orlando, the Achievers' awards are presented as part of the Orlando city council meeting.

**1971:** Many YMCAs give awards to young people who meet and exceed expectations. In March, Wendy Ikezaki of the Nuuanu branch of the Honolulu YMCA receives its Youth Service Award.

**1907:** YMCAs demonstrate their high expectations for leadership by setting up a training center for personal advancement in Arundel-on-the-Bay, Maryland. Many other states begin to do likewise.

**1851:** The first YMCA in North America (founded in Montreal on November 25) and the first in the United States (founded in Boston on December 29) both declare their purpose to be “the improvement of the spiritual and mental condition.”

# A Commitment to Facilitate Constructive Use of Time

**C**hildren and youth grow through constructive, creative, and enriching activities and programs. Ideally, these settings not only give young people meaningful, structured things to do but also connect them with principled, caring adults. Four developmental assets (Assets 17-20) make up the category of Constructive Use of Time.

## *Creative Activities (Asset 17)*

**Today:** YMCA Writer's Voice is the largest literary arts network in the United States. And the arts are integrated into many other YMCA programs. For example, child care centers such as the YMCA Preschool and Kindergarten at the YMCA of Greater Burlington, Vermont, offer enriching curricula that include art and music.

**1983:** The High Point YMCA in North Carolina offers a Community Artists' Residency Training Program. The San Francisco Y provides a place for young people's bands to practice.

**1950:** The YMCA in Racine, Wisconsin, has 47 boys in its Kilties drum-and-bugle corps.

**1857:** The YMCA in Charleston, South Carolina, offers classes in music.

## *Child and Youth Programs (Asset 18)*

**Today:** The El Camino YMCA in Mountain View, California, hires Juan Carlos Mercado as director of outreach programs to create programs and reach out to the Hispanic community in the area. The Daily Family YMCA of Bixby, Oklahoma, offers more than 40 programs in its rural setting including a number of youth sports, teen nights, teen dances, family nights, parents nights out, and a number of child care programs.

**1963:** Winifred Colton says that YMCAs now recognize programming toward "total family involvement."

**1955:** The Longview YMCA in Washington begins a swimming pilot program for young people with physical and mental disabilities.

**1867:** YMCA leaders begin working in rural communities to provide programs and activities to young men.



*“There ought to be gymnastic grounds and good bowling alleys, in connection with reading rooms, in every ward of the city.”*

Henry Ward Beecher, writing in 1862 about the need for YMCAs to have space for programs and activities.

### **Religious Community (Asset 19)**

**Today:** About 1,000 YMCAs in the United States collaborate with local congregations. The Fulton YMCA in Fulton, New York, for example, rents YMCA space to a non-denominational church for its weekly worship services.

**1916:** YMCAs collaborate with local congregations and create religious community within local Ys for young people to build character and values.

**1903:** YMCAs offer religious gatherings with “after meetings” for individuals who want more in-depth religious study and community.

**1856:** The YMCAs in Newark, New Jersey, and San Francisco create religious communities for members to engage in missionary work and teach religion to boys and girls.

### **Positive, Supervised Time at Home (Asset 20)**

**Today:** Many Y programs encourage family interaction at home. For example, YMCA Swim Lessons promote an at-home activity called “Family Huddles.” Others do so through special events, such as the “Bed Bowl” sponsored by the Tampa Area YMCA in Florida. Families use beds in a parade and an obstacle course race. Naturally, the event requires lots of planning at home!

**1984:** The YMCA of the USA introduces Home Team, a program that encourages families to have fun quality time at home and at events with other families.

**1951:** Trail YMCA staff in British Columbia survey fourth- to twelfth graders to find out how they spend their leisure time. The YMCA then maps where the homes of the young people are in an effort to promote YMCA involvement in those areas.

**1926:** Ojibway Joe Friday and Harold Keltner of the St. Louis YMCA in Missouri start Y-Indian Guides to promote the relationship between fathers and sons.





# A Commitment to Cultivate a Lifelong Commitment to Learning

**D**eveloping a lifelong commitment to learning opens doors for children and youth. It's not enough for young people to gain knowledge and skills; they also need to become invested and motivated in their educational journey. Five developmental assets (Assets 21-25) make up the category of a Commitment to Learning.

## ***Achievement Expectation and Motivation (Asset 21)***

**Today:** The variety of YMCA programs allows Ys to motivate many different kinds of children and youth, helping them feel a sense of accomplishment. Some youth might excel in a Youth and Government program, others on a sports team, and others in an arts program.

**1982:** Five Urban Program YMCAs in Chicago develop an Achievers' program for youth of color to explore their families' and ethnic groups' beginnings, struggles, and contributions.

**1950:** The National Council emphasizes that "out of the YMCA there should come a flow of persons imbued with a sense of social responsibility who will, as individuals, make their contribution to society through both private and public channels." It further suggests that such a flow should not be regarded merely as a by-product or left to casual processes.

**1854:** At the Y movement's Buffalo Convention, William Chauncy Langdon says YMCA members "ought to be those only who are and must be active."

## ***Learning and School Engagement (Asset 22)***

**Today:** Even the names of YMCA programs emphasize the fun and satisfaction of learning skills that will encourage children to advance to the next level. For example, in the preschool aquatics program, children begin as pikes and move up to become eels, rays, and starfish. In gymnastics, young people can move up from rollers (the beginners) through swingers, kippers, and flyers (the most advanced).

**1983:** The Cheshire County YMCA in Keene, New Hampshire, takes 44 young people and five adults on a seven-day "American Heritage" tour through Valley Forge and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; and Baltimore, Maryland.

**1913:** YMCA leader Laurence L. Doggett emphasizes "learning by doing," which helps young people engage in learning.

**1857:** The YMCA in Alexandria, Virginia, opens a school for 60 "scholars" who are children.

## ***Stimulating Activities and Homework (Asset 23)***

**Today:** YMCA after-school programs offer stimulating activities, and many help kids complete their homework. The YMCA of San Francisco offers homework programs such as "Computer Learning Centers," "Taking Our Services to Schools," and a "Three-Tier Tutorial." Children and youth in these programs learn good homework skills and how working hard translates into future success.

**1984:** Children receive tutoring in reading and arithmetic at the Henry Branch of the Chattanooga YMCA in Tennessee.

**1920:** YMCAs start the "Hour Glass Club" for young people to "study to grow." Through this program, young people learn how to study and do research.

**1884:** The Boston YMCA teaches 17 subjects to young people, giving them homework and projects to do.

**Enjoyment of Learning  
and Bonding to School  
(Asset 24)**

**Today:** “Fun” is another hallmark of YMCAs. YMCAs strive to make all programs fun so that people learn and stick with them. Some YMCAs have programs specifically to encourage academic success. For example, the YMCA of South Hampton Roads in Virginia converts a city bus into a mobile learning center. The bus provides education and recreation while building developmental assets and character.

**1979:** Many public schools give academic credit for the YMCA’s Youth and Government program, which, at this time, is conducted in 41 states with the involvement of 25,000 young people.

**1890:** YMCAs operate trade schools, evening classes, manual training, correspondence courses, and vocational guidance.

**1857:** YMCAs in New York City and Brooklyn offer classes in languages and gymnastics to give members the “advantages of an early education.”

**Reading for Pleasure  
(Asset 25)**

**Today:** Literacy is a component of many YMCA youth programs. At John Muir Elementary School in Santa Ana, California, the YMCA of Orange County’s “Reading Program” is part of the regular curriculum. Students read the newspaper every day, and fourth- and fifth-grade students read aloud to younger children for story hour.

**1984:** The Metro Y in Philadelphia and the YMCA in New Orleans offer literacy programs.

**1893:** At the movement’s annual convention, Edwin L. Shuey tells of important YMCA programs that encourage the habit of reading.

**1852:** The YMCA in Boston opens a library on March 11 that has several hundred books and newspapers to attract young men who have come in from the country.

*“Teenagers, for all of their angst, are just really responsive to the basics we offer in our programs—to education, to values, to higher expectations....Our programs not only have a legacy in the Y’s history, but they also really work.”*

Paula Gavin,  
President,  
YMCA of Greater New York



# A Commitment to Instill Positive Values

**S**trong, positive values guide the choices young people make. Six developmental assets (Assets 26-31) make up the category of Positive Values. The first two assets promote the value of caring and compassion for others and the world. The other four address developing individual character. All are consistent with the YMCA of the USA's character development thrust and its core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

## *Caring* (Asset 26)

**Today:** Caring is one of the four core values of the YMCA of the USA. The Ridgedale YMCA in Minnetonka, Minnesota, recognizes a caring youth as part of the annual community Caring Youth Recognition. Most recently, the YMCA gave the award to Cordoral Morgan.

**1985:** The Weir High School YMCA in West Virginia receives national recognition by Secretary of Education William Bennett for its caring activities, such as Teacher Appreciation Day, Tot Night (for children on Halloween), and for creating programming at a local nursing home.

**1950:** American YMCAs raise six million dollars through the "World Youth Fund" to rebuild YMCAs damaged in World War II.

**1863:** The YMCA of one Mississippi brigade organizes a one-day-a-week fast among its members and sends the saved rations to the poor in Richmond, Virginia.

◀ The YMCA float in the Boys' Day Parade in Omaha, Nebraska, 1920.

## *Equality and Social Justice* (Asset 27)

**Today:** YMCAs are for people of all incomes, ages, abilities, backgrounds, and beliefs. In Idaho, the YMCA has an annual fundraiser, the Idaho Great Potato Marathon, that includes two days of individual and team races. The money is used so that "no youth will be turned away due to inability to pay" at the YMCA.

**1977:** The national YMCA's Pre-Council Consultation on Programs for the Handicapped passes a resolution stating that "Handicappism ranks equally with Racism and Sexism as an area of vital social concern."

**1934:** During the first year that YMCAs record the number of members who are women and girls, they discover that 275 YMCAs have given memberships to 57,458 females. Three years later, 440 YMCAs collectively have 86,610 female members.

**1855:** The YMCAs at Springfield, Ohio, and Kingston, Canada West, reach out to advocate and care for the "destitute poor of our city."



## **Integrity (Asset 28)**

**Today:** YMCAs teach people how to stand up for what they believe in and gives them opportunities to do so. For example, the YMCA of Albuquerque creates volunteer programs for teens who believe it's important to help others.

**1972:** The YMCA movement starts the annual Brian Piccolo/YMCA Humanitarian Award that is presented to an outstanding professional athlete who "has unselfishly contributed to the betterment of his fellow man and his country." Winners eventually include Roger Staubach of the Dallas Cowboys and Phil Niekro of the Atlanta Braves.

**1968:** The YMCA of Miami creates a program to influence the moral and ethical values of middle-and high-school students through journaling and group process.

**1870s:** C. Howard Hopkins, author of *History of the YMCA in North America* (Association Press 1951), wrote that some observers at this time believe the true essence of YMCA work lies in "character-building activities."

## **Honesty (Asset 29)**

**Today:** Honesty is one of the four core values of the YMCA of the USA. And many Ys, such as the YMCA in Wichita, Kansas, and the YMCA Summer Day Camp in Rhode Island promote it as an explicit component of their programming.

**1913:** William Alphaeus Hunton believes that if young people can "see clearly," they will "live honestly." His 25 years of YMCA work on helping the races "see" each other focuses not only on cultural competence, but also on how to have open, honest dialogue that's respectful and affirming.

**1897:** Luther Halsey Gulick reports to the YMCA Convention that the YMCA's first objective should be the high standards of "Christian honesty and courtesy in athletics."

**1891:** Camping founder Sumner F. Dudley trains leaders in honesty and says "at least one trustworthy" leader is needed for every five to six boys.

## **YMCA Core Values and Assets**

All of the 40 developmental assets are consistent with the YMCA of the USA's core values. Below are some of the more obvious examples of how assets and values relate:

### ► **Caring**

- Family Support (Asset 1)
- Other Adult Relationships (Asset 3)
- Caring Neighborhoods (Asset 4)
- Caring Climate in Schools and Other Settings (Asset 5)
- Caring (Asset 26)

### ► **Honesty**

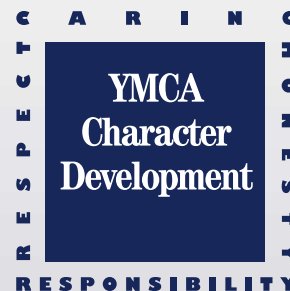
- Integrity (Asset 28)
- Honesty (Asset 29)

### ► **Respect**

- Positive Family Communication (Asset 2)
- Equality and Social Justice (Asset 27)
- Healthy Lifestyle and Restraint (Asset 31)
- Cultural Competence (Asset 34)

### ► **Responsibility**

- Children and Youth as Resources (Asset 8)
- Service to Others (Asset 9)
- Adult Role Models (Asset 14)
- Responsibility (Asset 30)



*“The YMCA does make a difference in people’s lives, and....there are three qualities that we can focus on: one, a sense of caring; two, a sense of humor; and three, a sense of commitment to principles.”*

Norma Guice,  
Trustee, the Hamilton-Fairfield (Ohio)  
Metro YMCA Board, and a Director on  
the Fairfield branch’s board in 1985  
(*Discovery YMCA*, Jan/Feb 1985).



### **Responsibility (Asset 30)**

**Today:** Responsibility is another of the core values of the YMCA of the USA. YMCAs in Florida report that 1,200 high school students from 60 different schools participate in the state’s YMCA Youth and Government Program. Each year, the program includes a “Youth Legislature” and a “Model United Nations” that teach young people to be responsible citizens and community leaders.

**1978:** A group of parents takes responsibility in reopening the YMCA in Jamestown, North Dakota, to give a place for young people to swim and play indoors during the long winter.

**1947:** Young people take responsibility for caring for and training their dogs for the beagle competition at the YMCA in Carney’s Point, New Jersey.

**1854:** YMCA young people take responsibility in fostering a national organization. Many leaders of this movement are in their late teens and early 20s.



### **Healthy Lifestyle and Restraint (Asset 31)**

**Today:** Health of spirit, mind, and body are promoted in all YMCA programs, from fitness to the arts to youth development. For example, the Central Douglas YMCA in Oregon promotes healthy spirit, mind, and body through its adolescent pregnancy prevention program conducted in collaboration with the Reduce Adolescent Pregnancy Partnership (RAPP) and the Phoenix Schools. It encourages self-respect, respect for others, and restraint.

**1957:** The YMCA in Lynn, Massachusetts, invites the state commissioner of narcotics, a woman’s probation officer, and members of the State Commission of Alcohol to speak to young people involved in Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y Clubs about the dangers of alcohol and drugs.

**1885:** The New York YMCA teaches sex education and has male members sign pledges to respect all women and not use “indecent language.”

**1877:** Boys at YMCAs make pledges not to use alcohol.

# A Commitment to Develop Social Competencies

All people need basic skills and competencies that equip them to build relationships and make positive choices. When young people have the opportunity to learn, practice, and master skills, they're much more likely to succeed in life. Five developmental assets (Assets 32-36) make up the category of Social Competencies.

## *Planning and Decision Making (Asset 32)*

**Today:** YMCA members and participants are regularly involved in program planning and leadership. Through the Parent Advisory Council at the YMCA after-school program at the San Juan School in Orange County, California, parents and children work together to plan and create an annual garden filled with roses, vegetables, and flowers.

**1983:** The Armed Services YMCA in San Diego, California, teaches a basic skills class to 5- to 13-year-olds on decision making, problem solving, and communication.

**1879:** Thomas Wakeman, son of Chief Little Crow, organizes the first Sioux Indian YMCA in Flandreau, South Dakota. Eventually 66 Sioux YMCAs are established.

**1879:** Luther Wishard encourages members of Student YMCAs to be "well organized" with "responsibility well distributed."

## *Interpersonal Competence (Asset 33)*

**Today:** One of the many leadership programs YMCAs offer is a camp "Counselor-In-Training" program for teenagers. This is a key program at the Princeton Family YMCA in New Jersey and at many other YMCAs.

**1946:** Camp Horseshoe in West Virginia begins offering annual leadership camps to young people, teaching them interpersonal communications, consensus building, and public speaking.

**1930:** Some YMCAs begin offering marriage classes to young men and women.

**1885:** John R. Mott, who went on to win the Nobel Prize because of his work with the YMCA, says, as a new member in 1885, he was greeted by peers, older youth, and adults who helped him become oriented and meet other people. "They broke down barriers by thus helping and befriending me," he says.

## *Cultural Competence (Asset 34)*

**Today:** YMCAs believe that all people are children of God and worthy of respect. Appreciation of diversity is a focus of many YMCA programs, including the youth camping program of the YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit.

**1946:** The Buchanan Street YMCA Branch in San Francisco becomes fully integrated by serving all races and including Blacks, Filipinos, Japanese, and Caucasians on its board.

**1918:** Following World War I, the YMCA Blue Ridge School in North Carolina educates Blacks and Caucasians on race relations.

**1859:** The Buffalo YMCA in New York distributes religious literature in five different languages, distributing 41,000 pieces to people of various cultures in the city.

*“We let them know what’s possible, what’s out there in the world. We offer them choices, possibilities, hope. But they are the ones who have to make it happen.”*

Chuck Bartlett,  
in 1990, on his YMCA work teaching  
basic living skills to Seattle teenagers  
from foster homes.

### **Resistance Skills (Asset 35)**

**Today:** To promote character, YMCAs promote “doing the right thing.” The YMCA in Lucas County, Ohio, for example, helps preschoolers do the right thing through its “BABES” program. It teaches them how to say no to dangerous situations and people pressuring them to do things they don’t want to do.

**1989:** At the YMCA in Round Rock, Texas, young people learn how to resist negative peer pressure and prevent relapsing into their previous alcohol addictions.

**1889:** YMCA leaders teach young people to avoid dangerous situations and resist negative peer pressure. Many young people stop smoking, swearing, and doing risky things.

**1885:** YMCAs design camping experiences to provide “healthful recreation without temptation.”

### **Peaceful Conflict Resolution (Asset 36)**

**Today:** YMCAs help people of all kinds learn to get along. The Ken Lay YMCA in Katy, Texas, helps children resolve conflicts peacefully during youth sport programs while also stressing the development of skills over competition.

**1978:** In partnership with the YMCA of Cairo, the Salt Lake City YMCA begins offering tours of Egypt to promote peace, understanding, education, and the arts.

**1935:** YMCAs promote interracial and international understanding so that all people can live in peace and harmony.

**1861:** At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Richmond YMCA in Virginia addresses Convention members “in the character of peacemakers” and urges delegates to develop “confidence and love” as a foundation to restore peace and goodwill between the North and the South.



# A Commitment to Nurture a Positive Identity

One of the critical tasks of childhood and adolescence is for young people to discover who they are and what they want to become. The Positive Identity assets focus on young people's views of themselves: their own sense of power, purpose, and promise. Four developmental assets (Assets 37-40) make up the category of Positive Identity.

## **Personal Power (Asset 37)**

**Today:** One of the ways that YMCAs encourage personal power is through membership. YMCAs in Milwaukee offer full membership to all teenagers involved in YMCA programs. Jack Lund, president/CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee, says the membership card, with its bar code and picture, is one of teen members' most cherished possessions. As with all members, YMCAs encourage the teens to take on leadership roles and to exercise their responsibilities as well as their rights as YMCA members.

**1983:** The Louisville, Kentucky, YMCA's Project Safe Place gives immediate refuge, counseling, and a sense of personal power to teenagers with family problems.

**1916:** Marguerite Standish Cockett, a physician who was not allowed to serve in the U.S. Army, buys a car, ships it to Italy, and drives it as an ambulance during the war. The YMCA then invites her to work in the French canteens.

**1845:** At age 14, William Chauncy Langdon (who later became the leader of the first Confederation of American YMCAs) invents a game of cards that illustrates English history. When it sells well, he creates another game about American history.

*“YMCAs were built...by the hard working people of great spirit who fought against impossible circumstances to build a better life for their children.”*

Jesse N. Alexander, Jr.,  
Director of YMCA Human Rights  
in 1978.



### **Self-Esteem (Asset 38)**

**Today:** Building a sense of self-worth is a long-standing goal in the YMCA movement. The Family YMCA of Southeast Mississippi in Hattiesburg offers a popular sports program for people with mental and physical challenges. Every Saturday, interested players participate with volunteers in games adapted to their abilities. “Volleyball, bowling, golf, softball, basketball—any sport is capable of being adapted to this,” says Executive Director Van Lowry. “Plus they see that they can achieve things, just like everybody else. A lot of them have never had that opportunity before.”

**1989:** The YMCA in Helena, Montana, celebrates kids at its Kids’ Fun Day, and 2,500 kids show up for games, contests, recreation, refreshments, and an animal show.

**1930:** YMCA summer camps teach young people “self-discovery, self-control, and taste for self-government.”

**1869:** At the YMCA in Salem, Massachusetts, young people who turn 15 and have had a good record for two years are given an honorary membership in the “senior” YMCA.

### **Sense of Purpose (Asset 39)**

**Today:** People often say that they joined the YMCA for a particular activity, such as swimming, but that they stay—and become more involved—because of the sense of community and purpose that they find there. In Webster, Texas, one way that the E.A. Smith Family YMCA gives young people a sense of purpose is through its Leadership Highschool, an intense, year-long program that includes modules on personal development, higher education, business, and cultural diversity. The program ends with a graduation ceremony.

**1990:** The YMCA in Seattle gives homeless families a sense of purpose by providing housing at the Columbia Court Apartments and by teaching them essential living and job skills.

**1924:** J.W. McCandless of the Minneapolis YMCA creates a philosophical approach to programs that are with young men, for young men, and by young men.

**1915:** C.C. Robinson begins a “Find Yourself” program to give young people vocational guidance.

### **Positive View of Personal Future (Asset 40)**

**Today:** Along with a sense of purpose, YMCAs offer a sense of hope. “Without the structure and support of Y after-school programs, I would never have had the success I did in school and confidence to overcome the obstacles in my path,” says Cornelius Abraham of the Chicago YMCA. His mother and her boyfriend brutally killed his brother when he was a child. He is now a sophomore at Northern Illinois University. The YMCA has created an award to honor his brilliant spirit and refusal to give up.

**1971:** The Memorial YMCA Camp opens in South Dakota to offer positive activities, provide role models, and create aspiration among young people who live on Sioux reservations. Between 1979 and 1982, the number of Sioux YMCAs grows from eight to 21.

**1899:** Luther Gulick, the creator of the YMCA “triangle” of spirit, mind, and body, says when young people come to the gymnasium for much needed recreation, “they need to be stirred up, made to laugh, and throw off their business.”

**1860s:** During the Civil War, weary Southern young people who are held as prisoners at Johnson’s Island, Ohio, show optimism and purpose by organizing a YMCA in the prison and getting 100 prisoners to join.



◀ Luther Gulick, creator of the YMCA “triangle” of spirit, mind, and body.



# Timeline: Asset-Building in the YMCA Movement

▶ **1989:** Search Institute introduces the framework of developmental assets. It begins conducting in-depth studies of sixth- to twelfth-grade students in communities across the United States. More than one million young people are surveyed and have their developmental assets measured within ten years.

▶ **1996:** Search Institute publishes *Making the Case: Measuring the Impact of Youth Development Programs*, commissioned by the YMCA of the USA. The report looks at developmental assets and characteristics of effective youth development programs.

▶ **1997:** The YMCA of the USA releases *YMCA Youth Programs: A Leadership, Advocacy, and Evaluation Kit*. The kit provides innovative tools to demonstrate to funders how YMCA programs build assets in young people.

1989

1995

1996

1997

▶ **1995-2000:** Search Institute serves as evaluator for the YMCA Earth Service Corps project, focusing on how it builds developmental assets through the six regional YMCA centers.

▶ **1996:** The YMCA is instrumental in launching a city-wide asset-building initiative in Seattle called “It’s About Time...For Kids.”



▶ **2000:** The North American Urban Group of YMCAs (which consists of the 35 largest YMCAs in Canada, Mexico, and the United States) passes a resolution to work with the YMCA of the USA to try to engage Search Institute in an alliance to help each local YMCA become an asset-rich environment for kids, families, and communities.

▶ **2001:** YMCAs continue receiving training on understanding the developmental assets framework and how to integrate assets into their daily work. The Lowell Area YMCA and the Grand Rapids YMCA in Michigan are two of the many YMCAs receiving training in this area.

▶ **2001:** The YMCA of the USA, YMCA Canada, and Search Institute begin to form an alliance to strengthen kids, families, and communities of all kinds by building developmental assets.

## 2000

▶ **2000:** The Metro Atlanta YMCA moves forward with initial plans for mobilizing community leaders, government agencies, schools, the religious community, nonprofit organizations, and volunteers by using the developmental asset framework.

## 2001

▶ **2001:** The Greater Brockport area (which includes Hamlin, Clarkson, Sweden, and the Village of Brockport, New York) names an asset-building community coordinator for the area: Shannon Zielinski, a former YMCA employee.



# Important Next Steps: A Worksheet

**B**uilding upon their strong legacy and current activities, YMCAs across the United States and Canada are working to become more systematic and deliberate about asset-building. This worksheet can help you reflect on your YMCA's activities using the eight categories of developmental assets. Photocopy this sheet and use it for every activity. Examine how each activity has built developmental assets in the past (by looking backward) and how it can build developmental assets in the future (by looking forward). It's a good tool for becoming more intentional about building assets in kids, families, and communities.

The YMCA of the USA would also like to learn of your efforts. Please consider photocopying any completed pages and sending them to Association Resources, YMCA of the USA, 101 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606.

Name of YMCA: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Activity or Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Asset Category</b>	<b>Looking Back</b>	<b>Looking Forward</b>
<p><b>Support</b> How do/will we reinforce caring relationships and a warm climate in which all participants feel welcome and accepted? How do/will we support others in caring for young people?</p>		
<p><b>Empowerment</b> How do/will we empower participants to serve and lead? How do/will we offer physical and emotional safety?</p>		

▶ <b>Asset Category</b>	▶ <b>Looking Back</b>	▶ <b>Looking Forward</b>
<p><b><i>Boundaries and Expectations</i></b>            How do/will we reinforce appropriate boundaries for behavior?            How do/will we challenge participants with high expectations?</p>		
<p><b><i>Constructive Use of Time</i></b>            How do/will we ensure that programs and activities maintain balance and use young people’s time well?</p>		
<p><b><i>Commitment to Learning</i></b>            How do/will we reinforce curiosity, learning, and discovery?</p>		
<p><b><i>Positive Values</i></b>            How do/will we reinforce and articulate positive values?</p>		
<p><b><i>Social Competencies</i></b>            How do/will we build participants’ life and relationship skills?</p>		
<p><b><i>Positive Identity</i></b>            How do/will we nurture a sense of purpose, value, and positive outlook in participants?</p>		

# ▶ 40 Assets Infants Need to Succeed (Birth to 12 Months)\*

## External Assets

### Support

1. **Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**—Parents communicate with infants in positive ways. Parents respond immediately to infants and respect their needs.
3. **Other adult relationships**—Parents have support from three or more adults and ask for help when needed. Infants receive additional love and comfort from at least one adult other than their parents.
4. **Caring neighborhood**—Infants experience caring neighbors.
5. **Caring out-of-home climate**—Infants are in caring, encouraging environments outside the home.
6. **Parent involvement in out-of-home situations**—Parents are actively involved in communicating infants' needs to caretakers and others in situations outside the home.

### Empowerment

7. **Community values children**—The family places infants at the center of family life. Other adults in the community value and appreciate infants.
8. **Children are given useful roles**—The family involves infants in family life.
9. **Service to others**—Parents serve others in the community.
10. **Safety**—Infants have safe environments at home, in out-of-home settings, and in the neighborhood. This includes childproofing these environments.

### Boundaries and Expectations

11. **Family boundaries**—Parents are aware of infants' preferences and adapt the environment and schedule to suit infants' needs. Parents begin setting limits as infants become mobile.
12. **Out-of-home boundaries**—Childcare settings and other out-of-home environments have clear rules and consequences for older infants and consistently provide all infants with appropriate stimulation and enough rest.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring and supervising infants' behavior as they begin to play and interact outside the home.
14. **Adult role models**—Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer observation**—Infants observe siblings and other children interacting in positive ways. They have opportunities to interact with children of various ages.
16. **Appropriate expectations for growth**—Parents have realistic expectations for infants' development at this age. Parents encourage development without pushing infants beyond their own pace.

### Constructive Use of Time

17. **Creative activities**—Parents expose infants to music, art, or other creative aspects of the environment each day.
18. **Out-of-home activities**—Parents expose infants to limited but stimulating situations outside the home. The family keeps infants' needs in mind when attending events.
19. **Religious community**—The family regularly attends religious programs or services while keeping infants' needs in mind.
20. **Positive, supervised time at home**—Parents supervise infants at all times and provide predictable, enjoyable routines at home.

## Internal Assets

### Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement expectation and motivation**—Family members are motivated to do well at work, at school, and in the community, and model their motivation for infants.
22. **Children are engaged in learning**—Parents and family members model responsive and attentive attitudes at work, at school, in the community, and at home.
23. **Stimulating activity**—Parents encourage infants to explore and provide stimulating toys that match infants' emerging skills. Parents are sensitive to infants' dispositions, preferences, and level of development.
24. **Enjoyment of learning**—Parents enjoy learning and model this through their own learning activities.
25. **Reading for pleasure**—Parents read to infants in enjoyable ways every day.

### Positive Values

26. **Family values caring**—Parents convey their beliefs about helping others by modeling their helping behaviors.
27. **Family values equality and social justice**—Parents place a high value on promoting social equality, religious tolerance, and reducing hunger and poverty while modeling these beliefs for infants.
28. **Family values integrity**—Parents act on their convictions, stand up for their beliefs, and communicate and model this in the family.
29. **Family values honesty**—Parents tell the truth and convey their belief in honesty through their actions.
30. **Family values responsibility**—Parents accept and take personal responsibility.
31. **Family values healthy lifestyle**—Parents love children, setting the foundation for infants to develop healthy attitudes and beliefs about relationships. Parents model, monitor, and teach the importance of good health habits, and provide good nutritional choices and adequate rest and playtime.

### Social Competencies

32. **Planning and decision making observation**—Parents make all safety and care decisions for infants and model safe behavior. As infants become more independently mobile, parents allow them to make simple choices.
33. **Interpersonal skills observation**—Parents model positive, constructive interactions with other people. Parents accept and are responsive to how infants express their feelings, seeing those expressions as cues to infants' needs.
34. **Cultural observation**—Parents know and are comfortable with people of different cultural, racial, and/or ethnic backgrounds, and model this to infants.
35. **Resistance observation**—Parents model resistance skills through their own behavior.
36. **Peaceful conflict resolution observation**—Parents behave in acceptable, nonviolent ways and assist infants in developing these skills by helping them solve problems when they're faced with challenging or frustrating circumstances.

### Positive Identity

37. **Family has personal power**—Parents feel they have control over things that happen in their own lives and model coping skills, demonstrating healthy ways to deal with frustrations and challenges. Parents respond to infants so infants begin to learn that they have influence over their immediate surroundings.
38. **Family models high self-esteem**—Parents create an environment where infants can develop positive self-esteem, giving infants appropriate, positive feedback and reinforcement about their skills and competencies.
39. **Family has a sense of purpose**—Parents report that their lives have purpose and demonstrate these beliefs through their behaviors. Infants are curious about the world around them.
40. **Family has a positive view of the future**—Parents are hopeful and positive about their personal future and work to provide a positive future for children.

\*Search Institute has identified a framework of 40 developmental assets for infants (birth to 12 months) that blends Search Institute's research on developmental assets for 12- to 18-year-olds with research on healthy child development. For more information, see *What Young Children Need to Succeed* (Free Spirit, 2000).

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial purposes only. Copyright © 2000 by Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.

# ▶ 40 Assets Toddlers Need to Succeed (Ages 13 to 35 Months)\*

## External Assets

### Support

1. **Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**—Parents communicate with toddlers in positive ways. Parents respond to toddlers in a reasonable amount of time and respect their needs.
3. **Other adult relationships**—Parents have support from three or more adults and ask for help when needed. Toddlers receive additional love and comfort from at least one adult other than their parents.
4. **Caring neighborhood**—Toddlers experience caring neighbors.
5. **Caring out-of-home climate**—Toddlers are in caring, encouraging environments outside the home.
6. **Parent involvement in out-of-home situations**—Parents are actively involved in helping toddlers succeed in situations outside the home. Parents communicate toddlers' needs to caretakers outside the home.

### Empowerment

7. **Community values children**—The family places toddlers at the center of family life and recognizes the need to set limits for toddlers. Other adults in the community value and appreciate toddlers.
8. **Children are given useful roles**—The family involves toddlers in family life.
9. **Service to others**—Parents serve others in the community.
10. **Safety**—Toddlers have safe environments at home, in out-of-home settings, and in the neighborhood. This includes childproofing these environments.

### Boundaries and Expectations

11. **Family boundaries**—Parents are aware of toddlers' preferences and adapt the environment to suit toddlers' needs. Parents set age-appropriate limits for toddlers.
12. **Out-of-home boundaries**—Childcare settings and other out-of-home environments have clear rules and consequences to protect toddlers while consistently providing appropriate stimulation and enough rest.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring and supervising toddlers' behavior as they begin to play and interact outside the home.
14. **Adult role models**—Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer observation**—Toddlers observe siblings and other children interacting in positive ways. They have opportunities to interact with children of various ages.
16. **Appropriate expectations for growth**—Parents have realistic expectations for toddlers' development at this age. Parents encourage development without pushing toddlers beyond their own pace.

### Constructive Use of Time

17. **Creative activities**—Parents expose toddlers to music, art, or other creative age-appropriate activities each day.
18. **Out-of-home activities**—Parents expose toddlers to limited but stimulating situations outside the home. The family keeps toddlers' needs in mind when attending events.
19. **Religious community**—The family regularly attends religious programs or services while keeping toddlers' needs in mind.
20. **Positive, supervised time at home**—Parents supervise toddlers at all times and provide predictable, enjoyable routines at home.

## Internal Assets

### Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement expectation and motivation**—Family members are motivated to do well at work, at school, and in the community, and model their motivation for toddlers.
22. **Children are engaged in learning**—Parents and family members model responsive and attentive attitudes at work, at school, in the community, and at home.
23. **Stimulating activity**—Parents encourage toddlers to explore and provide stimulating toys that match toddlers' emerging skills. Parents are sensitive to toddlers' dispositions, preferences, and level of development.
24. **Enjoyment of learning**—Parents enjoy learning and express this through their own learning activities.
25. **Reading for pleasure**—Parents read to toddlers every day and find ways for toddlers to participate in enjoyable reading experiences.

### Positive Values

26. **Family values caring**—Parents convey their beliefs about helping others by modeling their helping behaviors.
27. **Family values equality and social justice**—Parents place a high value on promoting social equality, religious tolerance, and reducing hunger and poverty while modeling these beliefs for toddlers.
28. **Family values integrity**—Parents act on their convictions, stand up for their beliefs, and communicate and model this in the family.
29. **Family values honesty**—Parents tell the truth and convey their belief in honesty through their actions.
30. **Family values responsibility**—Parents accept and take personal responsibility.
31. **Family values healthy lifestyle**—Parents love children, setting the foundation for toddlers to develop healthy attitudes and beliefs about relationships. Parents model, monitor, and teach the importance of good health habits, and provide good nutritional choices and adequate rest and playtime.

### Social Competencies

32. **Planning and decision making observation**—Parents make all safety and care decisions for toddlers and model safe behavior. As toddlers become more independently mobile, parents allow them to make simple choices.
33. **Interpersonal observation**—Parents model positive, constructive interactions with other people. Parents accept and are responsive to how toddlers use actions and words to express their feelings, seeing those expressions as cues to toddlers' needs.
34. **Cultural observation**—Parents know and are comfortable with people of different cultural, racial, and/or ethnic backgrounds, and model this to toddlers.
35. **Resistance observation**—Parents model resistance skills through their own behavior. Parents aren't overwhelmed by toddlers' needs and demonstrate appropriate resistance skills.
36. **Peaceful conflict resolution observation**—Parents behave in acceptable, nonviolent ways and assist toddlers in developing these skills by helping them solve problems when they're faced with challenging or frustrating circumstances.

### Positive Identity

37. **Family has personal power**—Parents feel they have control over things that happen in their own lives and model coping skills, demonstrating healthy ways to deal with frustrations and challenges. Parents respond to toddlers so toddlers begin to learn that they have influence over their immediate surroundings.
38. **Family models high self-esteem**—Parents create an environment where toddlers can develop positive self-esteem, giving toddlers appropriate, positive feedback and reinforcement about their skills and competencies.
39. **Family has a sense of purpose**—Parents report that their lives have purpose and model these beliefs through their behaviors. Toddlers are curious and explore the world around them.
40. **Family has a positive view of the future**—Parents are hopeful and positive about their personal future and work to provide a positive future for children.

\*Search Institute has identified a framework of 40 developmental assets for toddlers (13 to 35 months) that blends Search Institute's research on developmental assets for 12- to 18-year-olds with research on healthy child development. For more information, see *What Young Children Need to Succeed* (Free Spirit, 2000).

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial purposes only. Copyright © 2000 by Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.

# ▶ 40 Assets Preschoolers Need to Succeed (Ages 3 to 5 Years)\*

## External Assets

### Support

1. **Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**—Parents and preschoolers communicate positively. Preschoolers seek out parents for help with difficult tasks or situations.
3. **Other adult relationships**—Preschoolers have support from at least one adult other than their parents. Their parents have support from people outside the home.
4. **Caring neighborhood**—Preschoolers experience caring neighbors.
5. **Caring out-of-home climate**—Preschoolers are in caring, encouraging environments outside the home.
6. **Parent involvement in out-of-home situations**—Parents are actively involved in helping preschoolers succeed in situations outside the home. Parents communicate preschoolers' needs to caretakers outside the home.

### Empowerment

7. **Community values children**—Parents and other adults in the community value and appreciate preschoolers.
8. **Children are given useful roles**—Parents and other adults create ways preschoolers can help out and gradually include preschoolers in age-appropriate tasks.
9. **Service to others**—The family serves others in the community together.
10. **Safety**—Preschoolers have safe environments at home, in out-of-home settings, and in the neighborhood. This includes childproofing these environments.

### Boundaries and Expectations

11. **Family boundaries**—The family has clear rules and consequences. The family monitors preschoolers and consistently demonstrates appropriate behavior through modeling and limit setting.
12. **Out-of-home boundaries**—Childcare settings and other out-of-home environments have clear rules and consequences to protect preschoolers while consistently providing appropriate stimulation and enough rest.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring and supervising preschoolers' behavior as they begin to play and interact outside the home.
14. **Adult role models**—Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer interactions**—Preschoolers are encouraged to play and interact with other children in safe, well-supervised settings.
16. **Appropriate expectations for growth**—Adults have realistic expectations for preschoolers' development at this age. Parents, caregivers, and other adults encourage preschoolers to achieve and develop their unique talents.

### Constructive Use of Time

17. **Creative activities**—Preschoolers participate in music, art, dramatic play, or other creative activities each day.
18. **Out-of-home activities**—Preschoolers interact in stimulating ways with children outside the family. The family keeps preschoolers' needs in mind when attending events.
19. **Religious community**—The family regularly attends religious programs or services while keeping preschoolers' needs in mind.
20. **Positive, supervised time at home**—Preschoolers are supervised by an adult at all times. Preschoolers spend most evenings and weekends at home with their parents in predictable, enjoyable routines.

## Internal Assets

### Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement expectation and motivation**—Parents and other adults convey and reinforce expectations to do well at work, at school, in the community, and within the family.
22. **Children are engaged in learning**—Parents and family members model responsive and attentive attitudes at work, at school, in the community, and at home.
23. **Stimulating activity**—Parents encourage preschoolers to explore and provide stimulating toys that match preschoolers' emerging skills. Parents are sensitive to preschoolers' dispositions, preferences, and level of development.
24. **Enjoyment of learning**—Parents and other adults enjoy learning and engage preschoolers in learning activities.
25. **Reading for pleasure**—Adults read to preschoolers for at least 30 minutes over the course of a day, encouraging preschoolers to participate.

### Positive Values

26. **Family values caring**—Preschoolers are encouraged to express sympathy for someone who is distressed and begin to develop a variety of helping behaviors.
27. **Family values equality and social justice**—Parents place a high value on promoting social equality, religious tolerance, and reducing hunger and poverty while modeling these beliefs for preschoolers.
28. **Family values integrity**—Parents act on their convictions, stand up for their beliefs, and communicate and model this in the family.
29. **Family values honesty**—Preschoolers learn the difference between telling the truth and lying.
30. **Family values responsibility**—Preschoolers learn that their actions affect other people.
31. **Family values healthy lifestyle**—Parents and other adults model, monitor, and teach the importance of good health habits. Preschoolers begin to learn healthy sexual attitudes and beliefs as well as respect for others.

### Social Competencies

32. **Planning and decision making practice**—Preschoolers begin to make simple choices, solve simple problems, and develop simple plans at age-appropriate levels.
33. **Interpersonal interactions**—Preschoolers play and interact with other children and adults. They freely express their feelings and learn to put these feelings into words. Parents and other adults model and teach empathy.
34. **Cultural interactions**—Preschoolers are exposed in positive ways to information about and to people of different cultural, racial, and/or ethnic backgrounds.
35. **Resistance practice**—Preschoolers are taught to resist participating in inappropriate or dangerous behavior.
36. **Peaceful conflict resolution practice**—Parents and other adults model positive ways to resolve conflicts. Preschoolers are taught and begin to practice nonviolent, acceptable ways to deal with challenging and frustrating situations.

### Positive Identity

37. **Family has personal power**—Parents feel they have control over things that happen in their own lives and model coping skills, demonstrating healthy ways to deal with frustrations and challenges. Parents respond to preschoolers so preschoolers begin to learn that they have influence over their immediate surroundings.
38. **Family models high self-esteem**—Parents create an environment where preschoolers can develop positive self-esteem, giving preschoolers appropriate, positive feedback and reinforcement about their skills and competencies.
39. **Family has a sense of purpose**—Parents report that their lives have purpose and model these beliefs through their behaviors. Preschoolers are curious and explore the world around them.
40. **Family has a positive view of the future**—Parents are hopeful and positive about their personal future and work to provide a positive future for children.

\*Search Institute has identified a framework of 40 developmental assets for preschoolers (ages 3 to 5) that blends Search Institute's research on developmental assets for 12- to 18-year-olds with research on healthy child development. For more information, see *What Young Children Need to Succeed* (Free Spirit, 2000).

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial purposes only. Copyright © 2000 by Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.

# ▶ 40 Assets Elementary-School-Age Children Need to Succeed (Ages 6 to 11 Years)\*

## External Assets

### Support

1. **Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**—Parents and children communicate positively. Children are willing to seek advice and counsel from their parents.
3. **Other adult relationships**—Children have support from adults other than their parents.
4. **Caring neighborhood**—Children experience caring neighbors.
5. **Caring out-of-home climate**—School and other activities provide caring, encouraging environments for children.
6. **Parent involvement in out-of-home situations**—Parents are actively involved in helping children succeed in school and in other situations outside the home.

### Empowerment

7. **Community values children**—Children feel that the family and community value and appreciate children.
8. **Children are given useful roles**—Children are included in age-appropriate family tasks and decisions and are given useful roles at home and in the community.
9. **Service to others**—Children serve others in the community with their family or in other settings.
10. **Safety**—Children are safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.

### Boundaries and Expectations

11. **Family boundaries**—The family has clear rules and consequences and monitors children's activities and whereabouts.
12. **Out-of-home boundaries**—Schools and other out-of-home environments provide clear rules and consequences.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring children's behavior.
14. **Adult role models**—Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer interaction and influence**—Children interact with other children who model responsible behavior and have opportunities to play and interact in safe, well-supervised settings.
16. **Appropriate expectations for growth**—Adults have realistic expectations for children's development at this age. Parents, caregivers, and other adults encourage children to achieve and develop their unique talents.

### Constructive Use of Time

17. **Creative activities**—Children participate in music, art, drama, or other creative activities for at least three hours a week at home and elsewhere.
18. **Out-of-home activities**—Children spend one hour or more each week in extracurricular school activities or structured community programs.
19. **Religious community**—The family attends religious programs or services for at least one hour per week.
20. **Positive, supervised time at home**—Children spend most evenings and weekends at home with their parents in predictable, enjoyable routines.

## Internal Assets

### Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement expectation and motivation**—Children are motivated to do well in school and other activities.
22. **Children are engaged in learning**—Children are responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning.
23. **Stimulating activity and homework**—Parents and teachers encourage children to explore and engage in stimulating activities. Children do homework when it's assigned.
24. **Enjoyment of learning and bonding to school**—Children enjoy learning and care about their school.
25. **Reading for pleasure**—Children and an adult read together for at least 30 minutes a day. Children also enjoy reading or looking at books or magazines on their own.

### Positive Values

26. **Caring**—Children are encouraged to help other people.
27. **Equality and social justice**—Children begin to show interest in making the community a better place.
28. **Integrity**—Children begin to act on their convictions and stand up for their beliefs.
29. **Honesty**—Children begin to value honesty and act accordingly.
30. **Responsibility**—Children begin to accept and take personal responsibility for age-appropriate tasks.
31. **Healthy lifestyle and sexual attitudes**—Children begin to value good health habits and learn healthy sexual attitudes and beliefs as well as respect for others.

### Social Competencies

32. **Planning and decision making**—Children begin to learn how to plan ahead and make choices at appropriate developmental levels.
33. **Interpersonal skills**—Children interact with adults and children and can make friends. Children express and articulate feelings in appropriate ways and empathize with others.
34. **Cultural competence**—Children know about and are comfortable with people of different cultural, racial, and/or ethnic backgrounds.
35. **Resistance skills**—Children start developing the ability to resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. **Peaceful conflict resolution**—Children try to resolve conflicts nonviolently.

### Positive Identity

37. **Personal power**—Children begin to feel they have control over things that happen to them. They begin to manage frustrations and challenges in ways that have positive results for themselves and others.
38. **Self-esteem**—Children report having high self-esteem.
39. **Sense of purpose**—Children report that their lives have purpose and actively engage their skills.
40. **Positive view of personal future**—Children are hopeful and positive about their personal future.

\*Search Institute has identified a framework of 40 developmental assets for elementary-age children (ages 6 to 11) that blends Search Institute's research on developmental assets for 12- to 18-year-olds with research on healthy child development. For more information, see *What Young Children Need to Succeed* (Free Spirit, 2000).

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial purposes only. Copyright © 2000 by Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.

## ▶ 40 Assets Middle- and High-School-Age Youth Need to Succeed (Ages 12 to 18 Years)\*

### 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 parents.
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, school, and in the neighborhood.

#### Boundaries and 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 the community.
19. **Religious community**—Young person spends one or more hours 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.

### 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.

\*Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

This page may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial purposes only. Copyright © 1997 by Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415; 800-888-7828; [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org).