

ideas for parents

Easy Ways to Build Assets for and with Your Child

FAST FACTS

INTERNAL ASSETS

These four asset categories reflect internal values, skills, and beliefs that young people need to develop to fully engage with and function in the world around them.

How to Start

- Encourage a lifetime commitment to learning.
- Instill positive values in your child.
- Develop social skills in your child.
- Help your child develop a positive identity.

Internal Assets in Action

The second group of developmental assets is known as internal assets. They are the commitments, attitudes, values, and skills that support our youth from within.

One story of youth using their internal assets takes place in Hazen, North Dakota. Here, young people were faced with the problem of where to go and what to do on weekends. Hazen, a small town, had no convenient location where teenagers could talk, have fun, and simply hang out. That's when a leadership team of teenagers took action. They did some research and wrote a few proposals. In the end, they acquired the upstairs of an unused hockey arena. These students turned the area into a place for youth to hang out—complete with pool tables, video games, furniture, and most important, people. The hangout, named "Upstairs" by those who created it, is now open on weekend nights and is staffed by adult volunteers. They sell food and beverages, and they even have

a quiet room where people can go to talk. This fun, safe place was completely the result of the teenagers and their internal assets: responsibility, planning and decision making, and personal power.

As parents, we can't control the internal assets, but we can intentionally nourish them. As a result, our children will be able to take control and do something to improve their lives.



Asset-Building Ideas for Parents

Here are a few ideas for focusing on the positive as you raise your child:

- **Connect with other parents who are interested in asset building.**
- **Regularly do things with your child.**
- **Agree on family rules and consequences for violating those rules.**
- **Be aware of differences in how you relate to each of your children.**
- **Do intergenerational activities with**

extended family and other neighborhood adults and families.

- **Nurture your own assets by spending time with people who care about you and are supportive.**

Quick Tip:
Post the 40 developmental assets on your refrigerator door.

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.

Personal 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.