

Developmental Assets

Want to be a positive influence in the life of kids?
Want to “make a difference” just by being all of the positive things you already are?
Then read on...

The Search Institute is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization in Minneapolis that started exploring what was “right” with kids in the 1980s. They identified 40 positive experiences and qualities that all of us have the power to bring into the lives of children and youth, what are called *development assets*. For many people, the assets have become a source of ideas and inspiration in the face of frustration and even despair. The assets are divided into two sections, external and internal. They are further separated into 8 categories: Support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. Research has shown that having these assets promotes positive behaviors such as exhibiting leadership, maintaining good health, valuing diversity, and succeeding in school. They also protect from high-risk behaviors such as problem alcohol use, violence, illicit drug use and sexual activity.

In Douglas County, we have been working to integrate the asset philosophy throughout our schools and community. We have a community asset council that works on awareness campaigns and providing training to anyone that requests it. The council also picks an “Asset Builder”-of-the-month that is featured in our local newspaper.

If you would like more information on Search Institute or the research they have done, information can be obtained at www.search-institute.org

If you would like **more information** on the Asset Model, the Community Asset Council or trainings available to your group/organization or to nominate an “Asset Builder”-of-the-month contact Dori Draper at ddraper@dcsd.k12.nv.us or 782-5136 x1027.

Ideas for Asset Building

- *Encourage passions and interests in others.
- *Encourage teenagers to take leadership roles in their community.
- *Treat all people, regardless of age, with respect.
- *Organize a neighborhood book swap.
- *Ask a young person to teach you a new skill.
- *Be responsible for all of your thoughts, words and actions.