Introduction to the 40 Developmental Assets for Children and Youth

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<u>To stay “aloft” children need:</u>

- Asset positive environments
- Emotional Support
- Personal Values
- Social Skills

<u>Adults build support networks for children by providing:</u>

- Role models
- Safe places to go
- Experiences that are constructive and empowering

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CT-QSAT Program Area 1:

Relationships – Interactions and Engagement

A quality program is one where:

1. Adults are role models of positive and respectful relationships with both fellow staff and children/youth.
2. Adults build a sense of community and a welcoming, positive social/emotional climate.
3. Adults actively implement strategies to build positive relationships with each and every child/youth participant.
4. Adults are actively engaged with the children/youth as observed through their enthusiasm, interest, and interactions.
5. Children/youth are shown how to make responsible choices and offered opportunities to practice these skills.
6. Children/youth are empowered to request, design, and/or select activities that follow emerging interests.
7. Children/youth are active participants in leadership activities that may include program planning, activity leading, evaluation, and community outreach.
8. Both adults and children/youth promote physical and emotional safety through a culture of support, inclusion and mutual respect.

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The Developmental Relationships Framework

Express Care	Show me that I matter to you.
Challenge Growth	Push me to keep getting better.
Provide Support	Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.
Share Power	Treat me with respect and give me a say.
Expand Possibilites	Connect me with people and places.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS FRAMEWORK

EXTERNAL ASSETS

The first four asset categories focus on external structures, relationships, and activities that create a positive environment for young people.

1 Support	Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate, and accept them.	1. Family support 2. Positive family communication 3. Other adult relationships 4. Caring neighborhood 5. Caring school climate 6. Parent involvement in schooling
2 Empowerment	Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected.	7. Community values youth 8. Youth as resources 9. Service to others 10. Safety
3 Boundaries and expectations	Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best.	11. Family boundaries 12. School boundaries 13. Neighbourhood boundaries 14. Adult role models 15. Positive peer influence 16. High expectations
4 Constructive use of time	Young people need opportunities - outside of school - to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.	17. Creative activities 18. Youth projects 19. Religious community 20. Time at home

INTERNAL ASSETS

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

5 Commitment to learning	Young people need a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.	21. Achievement motivation 22. School engagement 23. Homework 24. Bonding to school 25. Reading for pleasure
6 Positive values	Young people need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices.	26. Caring 27. Equality and social justice 28. Integrity 29. Honesty 30. Responsibility 31. Restraint
7 Social competencies	Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations.	32. Planning and decision making 33. Interpersonal competence 34. Cultural competence 35. Resistance skills 36. Peaceful conflict resolution
8 Positive identity	Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them.	37. Personal power 38. Self-esteem 39. Sense of purpose 40. Positive view of personal future

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

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The fundamental assumption of the developmental assets is that the more positive experiences children have in their lives, the greater the likelihood that they will succeed developmentally.

"All it takes to help prevent youth from dropping out of school is one caring adult, one."

(Balfanz, 2007)

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Principles of Asset Building

1. All young people need assets
2. Asset building is an ongoing process
3. Everyone can build assets

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Who were your asset builders?

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"Personal commitments to building relationships with youth are critical. No matter how much money is spent, how many elaborate programs are initiated, how many laws are passed, or how many professionals are hired, the experiences of young people do not fundamentally change unless individuals take personal responsibility to contribute to young people's healthy development."

Peter L. Benson, Former President
Search Institute & Architect of the 40 Developmental Assets
www.search-institute.org

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