



Asset-Building Ideas for Libraries

Libraries and those who work in them can do more than nurture asset 25: Reading for Pleasure. In fact, libraries have tremendous potential to make a difference in the lives of young people. By giving young people access to books, computers, classes, and caring adults, libraries can open up a world of asset-building possibilities. Here are some ideas for what libraries can do to build assets:

- ◆ **Use the asset framework as a guide** when setting organizational priorities and goals.
- ◆ **Create displays that promote asset building** in general or your community's specific asset-building initiative. Post the list of assets in high-traffic areas of the library.
- ◆ **If your community has an asset-building initiative, offer the library as meeting space** for leadership teams, special committees, or other groups.
- ◆ **Train librarians, support staff, and volunteers to understand their role as asset builders.**
- ◆ **Design bookmarks with asset-building messages** to distribute to patrons.
- ◆ **Display artwork, inventions, and other projects of children and youth in your library.** Publicize the display in your community newspaper.
- ◆ **Develop planning and decision-making roles for young people,** such as including them on the library's board or creating a teen advisory group.
- ◆ **Create library internships for youth.**
- ◆ **Distribute lists of books with asset-building themes.**
- ◆ **Hold community workshops on how to choose asset-building books,** videos, and other materials.
- ◆ **Offer workshops for parents on how important it is for children to read and be read to.** Offer suggestions of specific books that might be appropriate for different age groups.
- ◆ **Create book groups where people can come together to discuss books.** Offer groups for children, teenagers, adults, and intergenerational groups.
- ◆ **Invite local authors to speak** about their writing and the role they think asset building has in the subjects they write about.
- ◆ **Create a community book chain** where each patron writes her or his favorite books on a piece of paper, and then link the pieces together to form a long chain in your library.
- ◆ **Encourage reading by having a community-wide read-a-thon.** Figure out ways to recognize participants in asset-building ways.
- ◆ **Work with educators who are book lovers** to develop asset-building reading programs and services.
- ◆ **Find storytellers in your community** and invite them to read, tell stories, or create dramatic presentations for children and youth.
- ◆ **Sponsor an event,** such as a poetry reading, planned by and offered to teenagers.