

Asset-Building Ideas for Sunday School Teachers

Chances are good that one reason you agreed to teach Sunday School is that you care a lot about young people and want to see them thrive. Your commitment to young people and your involvement in their lives can have a big impact on their Developmental Assets™ as well as on their spiritual growth. Here are some things you can do to help build their assets:

- Show each young person in your class or group that you care about her or him. Greet each one personally; Notice when they are absent. Say hi to them outside of Sunday school. Mention each one by name in your prayers during Sunday school.
- Create a climate in which young people's opinions, questions, and experiences are valued and respected.
- Let children and youth help choose and adapt learning activities.
- Connect learning with service to others. Have your group play with or read Bible storybooks to children in the nursery. Have your class prepare and lead an activity with younger children that serves older adults, such as making Easter or Christmas cards for church members who are shut-in or for nursing home residents.
- Be clear about how you expect the young people in your group to behave. In discussion with youth, set clear and fair ground rules. Be prepared to enforce them. Teach young people the boundaries on behaviors that are integral to the life of a believer in your church.
- Create meaningful learning activities for young people that help them stretch and grow in how to live their faith each day.
- Make lessons interesting, engaging, and relevant to young people's lives. Be creative with the format. Do some hands-on activities or games that teach and are fun. Take young people on a short field trip during your time together.
- Give children and youth opportunities to learn, practice, and teach social competencies. Role-play different ways to respond to real-life situations. Tie in biblical teaching and reference to a specific social competency asset, such as asset #33, which is about friendship and treating others well.
- Help shape young people's personal identity by helping them internalize their faith and discover their own sense of purpose.
- Find other teachers who are interested in asset building. Meet together to share ideas, discuss problems and possibilities, and celebrate what's working in your classroom.
- Nurture your own development as a teacher and a person of faith. Build on the strength of the assets you have.

