

## **Asset-Building Ideas for Youth**

YOU can make a difference for yourself, your peers, and younger children by learning about the 40 Developmental Assets™ and how to build them. Here are ideas on how to get started as an asset builder.

- Learn the names of your neighbors (including adults, children, and other teenagers). Ask one of your parents to introduce you to neighbors you don't know. Smile and greet these people by name when you see them.
- Post the 40 Developmental Assets in your room or in your locker. Choose a different asset each day and focus on nurturing it for your friends.
- Sample a variety of experiences and activities in music, theater, art, and athletics. Look for these experiences at church, at school, and in your community.
- Participate in at least one club, group, team, or sport—or find something creative that appeals to you, like acting or music.
- Get to know an adult you admire.
- In your daily conversations, replace put-downs with affirmations.
- Become a walking example of asset building. Learn more about the research and the implications of the asset framework.
- Write a note to or call someone who has made a difference in your life and thank her or him.
- Think of your best friends. Do they build you up or drag you down? How do they build assets for you? How do you build assets for them?
- Limit the amount of television you watch to only shows you really like.
- Volunteer to help others at church, at a local nursing home, community center, or animal hospital.
- Learn skills for resolving conflicts peacefully.
- Start a book club with friends and read just for fun.
- Practice different ways of saying “no” when people try to get you to do things that you know you shouldn't do.
- Talk about the 40 Developmental Assets with your family. Which assets do family members think are the strongest in your family?
- If you have a part-time job during the school year, limit your work schedule to allow time for schoolwork, doing things with family and friends, church involvement, and other activities.
- Identify something that each family member is good at, then learn from them.

- Discuss with other young people in your neighborhood what's good about where you live. Also discuss ways you could help improve the neighborhood.
- Even if your family provides a warm, caring, and supportive place to grow, also seek out supportive relationships with other adults in your church, school, or community organization.
- Examine the activities you are in outside of school. Are you feeling challenged? Do you enjoy the activities? Do you feel you have enough time to do the activities, complete your homework, and also have time for yourself, family; and friends? If not, consider making some changes.
- Seek out adult mentors and healthy role models. Work with them side-by-side in serving others.
- Become involved in a social issue that interests you, such as poverty; civil rights, endangered species, hunger, child abuse and neglect, the environment, or discrimination.
- Build positive relationships with children in your family, neighborhood, school, and church. Volunteer to help a teacher or coach, to baby-sit, or to play catch with the kids next door.
- Let your friends know that you are available when they need someone to talk to. If they need it, help them get it from a minister, counselor, social worker, parent, or other adult.
- Seek out people and information to help make your future dreams and plans come true.

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