

Huron County Initiative to “Build Assets in Our Youth”

“Everyone has a role to play to make a difference in the lives of our young people”

Positive change in our communities begins with each of us acting individually in our daily lives. While no one can persuade another to change, our actions and modeled behavior can help to impact change. The **power of one** is a good beginning; but it is the **power of many** that creates a momentum with the potential to do extraordinary things. Making a better world for young people requires the collective and deliberate efforts of all of us to make the change far-reaching and lasting. Everyone has a vital role to play.

The Community has already started...

Every community has people who are already building developmental assets for and with children and youth, even if they don't call it asset building. By sharing what you know and by networking, you'll join with others who want to make your community a place where young people can thrive. When hopeful people like you identify each other and work together, you can move forward with a plan for intentional powerful community change.

Existing structures are in place...

As you talk with individual youth and adults in your community...in youth-serving organizations, congregations, foundations, corporations, and school programs...pay attention to what is already working. These people and their organizations often have the knowledge and resources to be valuable partners in expanding a community's intentional asset-building efforts.

The young people should be part of the process...

An important resource that adults often overlook is young people themselves. Young people can make valuable observations, suggestions, and help to plan for their future. They can make a real and positive difference in helping to create a healthier and more caring community.

The Power of Developmental Assets

Communities large and small have indicated that the Developmental Assets framework gives them a common language that allows them to connect the work they are already doing with the healthy development of children and youth. The framework identified by researchers in the early 1990's, offers inspirations, motivation, and a simple tool for looking at what our community and our young people have going for them as

well as finding areas that need increased attention.

Half of the 40 assets are external assets, which focus on the support that young people get from the people in their lives, including a sense of feeling valued, clearly defined boundaries, high expectations, and opportunities to participate in activities. The other half are internal assets, which reflect young people's commitment to learning, their sense of self-worth, their positive values, and the skills they possess to make good life choices. Search Institute's **Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors** and **Me and My World** surveys are tools that communities and individual organizations can use to measure their young people's experiences of the Developmental Assets.

For more than 45 years, Search Institute has studied adolescent development and its connection to community change, analyzing scientific findings and survey data to understand how the Developmental Assets work. After surveying more than two million young people, it was found that, on an average, young people report having only 19 of 40 assets. It was also discovered that the surveys inform community members about the strengths and needs of the community through their own young people's eyes.

When community members use surveys and other techniques to elicit the input of young people to define the changes that need to be made, the collective youth voice contributes inspiration and momentum to community change.

40 Developmental Assets

This list brought to you by the Search Institute should be shared with other adults. Be sure to ask them who was there for them when they were growing up. Reflect on personal experiences to help bring alive the importance of asset builders in the lives of young people. It will motivate current asset builders' efforts toward community change.

What young people need	Asset Category	Developmental Asset
Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate and accept them.	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Support 2. Positive family communication 3. Other supportive adult relationships 4. Caring neighborhood 5. Caring school climate 6. Parent involvement in schooling
Young people need to feel valued And valuable.	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth 8. Youth as resources 9. Service to others 10. Safety
Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking the rules and encouragement to be and do their best.	Boundaries and Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries 12. School boundaries 13. Neighborhood boundaries 14. Adult role models 15. Positive peer influence 16. High Expectations
Young people need opportunities outside of school to develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.	Constructive use of time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative Activities 18. Youth programs 19. Religious community 20. Time at home
Young people need a sense of lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.	Commitment to learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement motivation 22. School engagement 23. Homework 24. Bonding to school 25. Reading for pleasure
Young people need strong guiding values to help them make healthy life choices	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring 27. Equality and social justice 28. Integrity 29. Honesty 30. Responsibility 31. Restraint
Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations.	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making 33. Interpersonal competence 34. Cultural competence 35. Resistance skills 36. Peaceful conflict resolution
Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and feel they have control over what happens to them.	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power 38. Self-esteem 39. Sense of purpose 40. Positive view of personal future

2008-2009 Focus

On Asset Building in Huron County

September – 2008

Commitment to Learning: Children and young people benefit in all aspects of life when they develop a passion for learning and a genuine belief in their own abilities. They need to know that “getting an education” is a rewarding, lifelong process.

October – 2008

Constructive Use of Time: Children and young people learn important lessons when they try new things, develop skills, and spend enjoyable time with adults and other young people. They need adults to help them balance structured activities, time at home with family, and time just hanging out with others.

November – 2008

Support: When children and young people have loving, caring relationships with their families, other adults and peers, they are more likely to feel comfortable and secure with themselves and the world. They need to know that they are accepted and appreciated simply for who they are.

December – 2008

Boundaries: Children and young people are more likely to thrive when those around them believe in their abilities and expect them to do their best. They need sincere acknowledgement of accomplishments and consistent, age-appropriate consequences for breaking rules.

January – 2009

Empowerment: Children and young people can be their best when they know they are valued, valuable and safe. They need opportunities to take positive risks and to contribute meaningfully to their families and communities.

February – 2009

Positive Values: Children and young people make wiser choices when guided by strong core values, such as caring about others, taking responsibility for their actions and words, being honest, and protecting their own well-being. They need adults to model and teach these priorities.

March – 2009

Social Competencies: Children and young people make the most of relationships and opportunities when they are able to cope with new situations, make positive decisions, and interact effectively and respectfully with others. They need instruction and practice in how to develop these skills.

April - 2009

Expectations: Children and young people are more likely to thrive when those around them believe in their abilities and expect them to do their best. They need sincere acknowledgement of accomplishments and consistent, age-appropriate consequences for breaking rules.

May – 2009

Positive Identity: When children and young people believe in their self-worth and in a positive future they have a stronger identity. They need to know they have control over much of what happens in their lives, and that their lives have purpose and meaning.

Building Assets in Youth is everyone’s responsibility. Positive change in our community begins with each of us acting individually in our own lives. The “Power of One” is a good beginning to make good and positive changes, but the “Power of Many” creates a momentum that will really make a difference in Huron County.

September - 2008

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September Developmental Asset is focused on Commitment to Learning.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
Achievement Motivation: Young person is motivated to do well in school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applaud their efforts to do well in school. • Model good behavior regarding work and its place in your life. • Show excitement about learning new things.
School Engagement: Young person is actively engaged in learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage exploration and interest in learning. • Expose students to new concepts and ideas allowing for practical experiences to support the theoretical.
Homework: Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to new learning can be evidenced by the willingness to apply knowledge at home. • Practice makes perfect...perfect practice makes perfect...
Bonding to School: Young person cares about his or her school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school system works to establish positive relationships with students and parents.
Reading for Pleasure: Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support reading process through sustained and regular reading in school. • Parents encourage reading through appropriate and frequent modeling of this practice.

October - 2008

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October Developmental Asset is focused on Constructive Use of Time.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
<p>Creative Activities: Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater or the arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking fine arts classes in school. • Participation in a community theater group. • Attending various theatrical or musical productions.
<p>Youth Programs: Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs or organizations at school or in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in extra and co-curricular activities. • Participate in 4-H programs. • Participate in recreational programs in the community.
<p>Religious Community: Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in various religious youth programs. • Participate in weekly worship services.
<p>Time at Home: Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time with the family. • Avoid going out with friends just to get away from home.

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November Developmental Asset is focused on Support: "Family" and "Family Communication".	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
<p>Family life provides high levels of love and support: Young person feels loved and protected by family members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hug them. • Stay with them when they are afraid. • Read aloud together. • Forget your worries and concentrate on them. • Play together with them.
<p>Positive Family Communications: Young person and his or her parents communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look into their eyes when you talk to them. • Listen to them. • Set boundaries that keep them safe and then tell them "why". • Delight in their discoveries. • Support and counsel them.
<p>Other adult relationships: Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to them. • Ask them about themselves. • Be interested in their opinions.
<p>Caring Neighborhood: Young person experiences caring neighbors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say "hello" when you pass them in the neighborhood. • Wave to them when they go by. • Ask them how they are doing when you have a chance. • Compliment them on their smile, dress or actions.

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December Developmental Asset is focused on Boundaries and Expectations.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
<p>Family Boundaries: Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a "Family Action Plan" provided for by the ADAMhs Board. • Parents put themselves "in the way" of destructive behaviors in the youth.
<p>School Boundaries: School provides a clear set of rules and consequences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the student handbook with parents and students. • Encourage parents to attend meeting to review school rules. • Encourage the use of the "Family Action Plan" to enhance the relationship between school and home.
<p>Neighborhood Boundaries: Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors encourage appropriate behavior by praising exemplary actions. • Neighbors correct inappropriate behavior by pointing out situations in a non-threatening manner. • Neighbors support parents in making neighborhoods a good place for young people.

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January Developmental Asset is focused on Empowerment: “Community Values” and “Resources”.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
<p>Caring School Climate: School provides a caring, encouraging environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus drivers greet each student as they enter the bus. • Teachers greet students as they enter their classroom. • Staff members make eye contact with all students and smile. • Teachers send home success notes to improving and hard working students.
<p>Parent involvement in schooling: Parent (s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent attends at least two PTA meetings during each semester. • Parent sends a positive note to at least one teacher each semester. • Parent checks on homework of their child every night. • Parent discusses school and what is happening at least three times per week.
<p>Community values Youth: Young people perceive that the adults of the community value the youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community participates in asset building process. • Articles are written in the newspaper highlighting the accomplishments of young people. • Community initiative exists to highlight the assets in youth programs.
<p>Youth as resources: Young people are given useful roles in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people serve as “big brothers” and “big sisters”. • Young people are asked to serve on community building committees. • Young people are asked their opinion on key issues.

February - 2009

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February Developmental Asset is focused on Positive Values.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
Caring: Young person places high value on helping other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide service opportunities for students. • Establish peer support groups at grade level. • Provide opportunity for "Big Brother" and "Big Sister" program experiences.
Equality and social justice: Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students work for the food bank...collecting and distributing. • Students experience diversity from an intimate perspective.
Integrity: Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are encouraged to share their feelings and opinions regarding world, state and local events. • Student are encouraged to take a "position" regarding the stated events...using critical thinking skills.
Honesty: Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support "telling the truth" by supporting honest statements. • Provide incentives to be honest when dealing with situations wrought with difficulty.
Responsibility: Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate rewards and consequences for individual decisions; at home, at school and in the community.
Restraint: Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students make positive decisions, avoiding destructive behavior.

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March Developmental Asset is focused on Social Competencies.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
Planning and decision making: Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower young people to help and be themselves. • Provide and develop critical thinking skills.
Interpersonal Competence: Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students to understand social responsibilities and the “golden rule”.
Cultural Competence: Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help develop sensitivity to “differences” by providing students with varied cultural, social and economic experiences.
Resistance Skills: Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults model appropriate behaviors. • Discuss the situations young people face directly confronting destructive behaviors.
Peaceful conflict resolution: Young person seeks to resolve conflict non-violently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach and provide practice in techniques depicting peaceful conflict resolution.

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April Developmental Asset is focused on Boundaries and Expectations: "Neighborhoods", "Adult Role Models" and "Positive Peer Influence".	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
<p>Service to others: Young people serve the community one or more hours per week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people act as peer tutors helping other students. • Read to other and/or younger students. • Help a senior citizen with yard work. • Volunteer at a senior center.
<p>Safety: Young person feels safe at home, at school and in the neighborhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start a neighborhood watch to protect the children in community. • Establish and maintain a bus watch program to watch out for students being bused to school. • Avoid threatening comments and actions in the home. • Make a safety plan for in the home.
<p>Positive Peer Influence: Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage young people to make good choices. • Young people should feel free to speak up to support each others' decision making.
<p>High Expectations: Both parents and teachers should encourage the young person to do well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help young people to learn to establish goals. • Praise the hard work and accomplishments of young adults. • Communicate the need for hard work to accomplish success.

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May Developmental Asset is focused on Positive Identity.	
Asset Description	Action Plan for Implementation
Personal Power: Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide experiences where young people have a direct influence in their lives regarding decision making.
Self-esteem: Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to develop as many positive assets as possible in the young person...providing support and encouragement when experiences happen.
Sense of purpose: Young person reports that "my life has a purpose".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young person must have an opportunity to make decisions and enjoy the responsibility / consequences associated with those decisions. (guided decisions)
Positive view of personal future: Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect the best but not perfection. • Empower them to be themselves. • Welcome their suggestions and celebrate their decisions. • Encourage and support them.