

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF ASSET BUILDING AND
VALUE EDUCATION AMONG ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE
PREVENTION IN ADOLESCENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

It is no surprise that many stressors go hand in hand with being an adolescent: self-concept, hormonal changes, abuse, sexual identity, bullying, peer pressure, and every day decision making and problem solving skills, just to name a few. Research has indicated that over 50 percent of adolescents have turned to alcohol and other drug use (at least one time) as a way to cope with the stress of life. Although a variety of solutions to

this problem have been tried, there seems to be little progress and, in fact, this problem seems to be growing larger.

There is growing recognition of the importance of developmental asset building and value education as a key preventative measure. There are 40 common developmental assets that have been identified. The higher number of assets an adolescent has the more likely they are to succeed. The developmental assets, which include external and internal, build upon personal strengths, behaviors, characteristics, thoughts, feelings, and skills that are needed to increase opportunities for healthy, happy, and successful lifestyles.

The first purpose of this study was to examine the impact of asset building and value education in AODA prevention among adolescents. The second purpose was to perform a critical analysis of information in this area and to formulate a set of recommendations to parents, professional educators, and community members.

In the introduction, an understanding of adolescent life stressors and coping mechanisms was explored. Following this was a review of the literature on the severity of adolescent drug use, the need for developmental asset building and value education among adolescents, and the impact of the forty developmental assets on young people. Conclusions and recommendations are directed toward members in communities and the involvement in asset building among the youth in their communities.

The findings in this study revealed that drug and alcohol use among adolescents has increased dramatically over the past few decades. Current prevention programs and techniques are struggling in their effectiveness. The Search Institute's 40 developmental assets are recognized as a success in regards to the healthy development of today's youth:

ideally, every youth should experience at least 31 assets. However, the vast majority of adolescents experience far less than the ideal, on average 18 assets are reported. Finally, the research supports the theory of community wide involvement as a key factor for the healthy development of youth.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Adolescence is a hard transition between childhood and adulthood. Brixius (1986) described this period of time where individuals in this phase of life are neither adults nor children and are struggling with trying to find the balance between the two. During this time, adolescents quarrel against authority and yet try to practice adult behaviors that are forbidden to them (Brixius, 1986). This balance involves many stressors that go hand in hand with being an adolescent: self-concept, hormonal changes, abuse, sexual identity and confusion, bullying, peer pressure, and every day decision-making and problem-solving skills, just to name a few.

It is no surprise that with all of the pressures that adolescents go through, many turn to drugs and alcohol to help them better deal with these changes. According to Fleming (1992), many adolescents are disillusioned to believe that using drugs or alcohol will help them cope and make them appear older and more mature; they also discover a quick fix to popularity, acceptance, and, feeling good, at least for a short while.

Substance abuse is widespread among adolescents and a growing concern for our nation. These youth are our future. Fleming (1992) identified many of the needed life and social skills that are learned during adolescence: dealing with feelings, being responsible, taking responsibility for behavior, setting and working towards goals, problem solving, and handling independence. An expert in the field (Lawson, 1992) stated “as these adolescents mature into adulthood and assume leadership roles in our

society, they will bring with them the values and aspirations that they have accumulated as they grow into adulthood” (p. 14).

With the knowledge that important life and social skills are learned during adolescence, it is of distress to realize that substance abuse is a growing epidemic with America’s youth. There is great concern that the use of alcohol and other drugs cause both physical and psychological problems for the growing mind and body of an adolescent (Brooks, 1984). When young people deal with stress and problems by using drugs or alcohol, they are missing out on important lessons that will most likely handicap them in their future successes. Although a variety of solutions to these problems have been tried, there seems to be little progress in curbing alcohol and drug use among adolescents, and, in fact, the problem is growing larger.

The Search Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota is one of the leading organizations promoting the well-being of children and adolescents through asset building and value education in hopes to combat the problem of substance abuse in adolescents. The Search Institute describes assets as 40 key building blocks that help youth grow up healthy and help youth to succeed. According to the Life Style Enhancement Services, the follow up research conducted by the Search Institute has found that the 40 developmental assets are very powerful factors in shaping youths’ behavior, both by reducing negative behaviors and by increasing positive ones. The more assets a youth experiences, the more powerful the effect – yet the average youth across the United States has fewer than half of the assets. Although the Search Institute nationally launches community wide interventions aimed at enhancing the assets of youth

in their area, Bradley (1982) indicated that communities must acknowledge the existence of a problem before any kind of prevention program can be established and gain support.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is two fold. The first purpose is to examine the impact of asset building and value education in AODA prevention among adolescents. The second purpose is to perform a critical analysis of information in this area and to formulate a set of recommendations to parents, professional educators, and community members. This information was collected through a comprehensive review and critical analysis of research and literature based upon the objectives of the study.

Research Objectives

This study has three objectives:

1. To examine the need for developmental asset building and value education among adolescents.
2. To identify the success of this preventative approach in regards to alcohol and other drug abuse.
3. To identify the importance of community-wide attention and involvement for the healthy development of young people.

Definition of Terms

The following term needs to be defined for clarity in understanding.

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse – the acronym for alcohol and other drug abuse is AODA and will be used numerously throughout this study.

For the purposes of this study the following terms will be used interchangeably: chemical dependency, alcohol abuse and drug addiction, and substance abuse.

For the purposes of this study the following terms will be used interchangeably: moral education, character education, and value education.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research on the current drug and alcohol abuse among adolescents and the need for successful AODA prevention programs. This chapter will also define and explain the forty developmental assets, value education, and the impact it has on adolescents in regard to a successful preventative approach to substance abuse.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Substance abuse could be defined as the use of any chemical substance that causes emotional, behavioral, mental, physical, and / or social harm to and individual or to the people close to him or her (LaChance, 1984). According to a researcher in the field, in America, the level of drug use among young people is the highest of any developed country in the world (LaChance, 1989). Over the last few decades, adolescent drug use in the United States has increased dramatically. This increase has occurred even with urgent warnings against drug use from parents, educators, and the media.

Although parents, educators, and the media are known for giving urgent warnings against the use of drugs and alcohol, the media also glamorizes alcohol and drug use. Substance abuse is a learned behavior, and a behavior that appears to be socially acceptable. A researcher in the field (Lawson, 1992) wrote about a survey that 1,580 adolescents participated in. The results showed that expectancies as to the effects of alcohol were well developed in adolescents before they began to use. These expectancies

were developed primarily through observation of and relationship with family, peer groups, and the media (Lawson, 1992).

The media has a significant impact on the formation of adolescents' attitudes, patterns, and behaviors regarding the use of drugs and alcohol. The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign's (NYADMC) report on adolescents, movies, and music found 90 percent of 12- to 20-year-olds account for 26 percent of all movie admissions and 63 percent of 9- to 17-year-olds watch at least one rented video per week (2003). Substance use portrayed in popular movies and music has an influence on adolescents' drug usage.

The Media Campaign found that adolescents spend an average of 4 to 6 hours a day listening to music (2003). It is important to realize that there are a lot of other factors that contribute to adolescents' substance abuse, however, media content still has an impact on how young people view drug and alcohol use from the incorporation of the many messages and images seen. These messages and images most often legitimize, glamorize, and portray the appearance of social acceptance toward drug and alcohol use. The NYADMC (2003, n.p.) concluded:

media messages influence young people by providing explicit, concrete "models" for behaviors, attitudes, and feelings toward drug usage. Therefore, whenever an adolescent encounters a media depiction or portrayal as in a movie or song, the potential exists for the behavior to be imitated. Young audience members are more likely to learn and imitate behaviors performed by attractive, successful, or powerful role models or associated with positive outcomes such as approval, money, power, romance, and sex.

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign's research of this issue concludes that if substance abuse is portrayed frequently and in ways that appear attractive or with positive outcomes then music and movies do contribute to the problem (2003).

In addition to the media's influence, the sway of adolescents' peers is even greater. As children grow older the importance of their friends and of peer influence and acceptance is a normal part of adolescent development. Parental influence declines during this time and peer influence increases. A major factor in adolescent substance abuse is the influence of peers. Peer acceptance and influence are responsible for a large percentage of initial adolescent drug use. An author in the field wrote ". . .behavior among teenagers – whether it involves smoking, taking a gun to school, or drinking a harmless can of Coke – has extraordinary and contagious power" (Gladwell, 2002, p. 270). It is no doubt that peers have an impact on the formation of the adolescent's attitudes, patterns, and behavior regarding the use of alcohol and drugs (Blum, 1987).

The Denver Youth Study found that peer influence was a distinguishing factor between youth who became delinquent or who maintained their delinquency (Huizinga, 1995). According to the research by Giancola on adolescent behavior problems and peer influence no other factor could explain adolescent delinquent behavior better than (negative) peer influence (2000). It is also important to note the protective factors of positive peer influence was important in guarding against problem behaviors associated with negative peer influence (Giancola, 2000).

Parental modeling and attitudes of chemical use is a key factor in adolescent tendencies toward alcohol and drug use. The old saying "do what I say, not what I do" is

a very dangerous and destructive way to parent children. Children learn what is shown to them. It is essential for parents to model responsible behaviors in regards to chemical use. In addition, parents need to knowingly teach children about the dangers of substance use starting at a young age and beware of what they are unknowingly teaching their children through what the children see them do and what the children hear their parents say.

LaChance's research has found that members in a chemically dependent family are unknowingly encouraging substance use. The unknowing encouragement happens by the children modeling the behaviors of the chemically dependent member (1984). These behaviors of the chemically dependent person include "teaching" the rest of the members in the family, especially adolescents, unhealthy and inappropriate ways to function in life. Unhealthy behaviors and inappropriate ways to function is modeled by the parent through their chemical use and attitudes in every day life events: how to cope with problems, to manage anger, to have fun and socialize, to deal with hurts and to avoid pain, to self-medicate numerous conditions, etc. Although not all adolescents who use chemicals come from families who model this type of behavior, the highest incidents of substance use among adolescents occurs from families whose parents are either teetotalers or chemically dependent with unclear expectations toward the use of chemicals (Operation Threshold, 1987).

The National Household Survey conducted in 2000 reported that marijuana use by 12 – 17 year olds has gone up 276 percent since 1992. The survey also found that "only eight percent of high school students had never used alcohol and only 31 percent had never smoked cigarettes. Over two-thirds of those surveyed reported use of at least one

illicit substance” (p. 9). The National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) stated in 2001 that ecstasy tablets seized by the Drug Enforcement Agency increased from 13, 342 in 1996 to 949,257 in 2000. The NIDA went on to report that club drugs (ecstasy, rohyphonl) mentioned in Emergency Room medical reports increased from 250 in 1994 to 2,850 in 1999.

According to NDCP (2000) national statistics, approximately one in six high school seniors reported drinking to the point of inebriation on at least a weekly basis. Nationally, 40 percent of high school students reported using drugs other than marijuana (NDCP, 2000); with cocaine, amphetamines, and “club drugs” being the other major drugs of abuse (Thomas, 1995). Nationally, 18 percent of eighth graders have used inhalants (NIDA, 2001).

Locally, in March of 2000, the Search Institute conducted a study in Dunn County, Wisconsin called A Profile of Your Youth. This study was given to 1100 students in all eighth, tenth, and 12th grades in the Dunn County School District. The results of this study showed that 60 percent of high school seniors, 41 percent of sophomores, and 26 percent of eighth graders had used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days. In addition, 39 percent of seniors, 26 percent of sophomores, and 14 percent of eighth graders got drunk more than once in the last two weeks. Sixty-five percent of the high school students surveyed used or have used marijuana and 46 percent used or have used illicit drugs: cocaine, LSD, PCP, angel dust, heroin, amphetamines, and inhalants. Seven percent of eighth grade students used or have used marijuana and 16 percent used or have used illicit drugs, including inhalants.

According to the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse smoking, drinking, and drug use among young teens is higher in rural America than in the country's urban areas. Research done by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse found that “eighth-graders living in rural areas are 104% likelier to use amphetamines, including methamphetamines, than those in urban areas. Rural youth are 50% more likely to use cocaine” (2002, p.13).

It is apparent that as adolescents get older, their risk-taking behaviors involving chemical use increase. This means that as a child only starts out with alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana use, as the child gets older he or she then experiments with more harmful drugs and more frequent use of drugs. It is also reported that one out of four people diagnosed with dependence to illicit drugs is an adolescent (NIDA, 2001). A researcher in the field (Niehaus,1999) explains that as the process of adolescent substance abuse moves toward addiction the chemically dependent adolescent's main focus is getting high. Niehaus (1999, p. 2) reported:

The abusing adolescent pays less attention to his or her surroundings. The attention span shortens and the youth sees the world through a haze. Under these circumstances, little learning or social skill development can occur and the adolescent moves tediously, if at all, through the developmental stages. Cognitive growth appears to stop once substance abuse becomes habitual. One developmental delay associated with chemical abuse is the inability to think in abstract terms, thinking then remains at the concrete level. Adolescent and young-adult substance abusers think and act more like children with respect to morality and

ethics. Adolescent substance abusers cognitively function on a concrete level.

In essence, once an adolescent becomes physically and psychologically addicted to substances, their maturity level and cognitive abilities cannot increase past their level at the point of addiction; therefore, the ability to learn new concepts is inhibited. The reason for the inability to learn new concepts and lack of maturity among a drug addicted person is because the adolescent's brain stops developing and growing. The use of substances affect the mental and emotional development of adolescents - including the formation of strong self-identity, emotional and intellectual growth, establishment of future goals, the development of rewarding personal relationships all which interfere with how young people approach, interpret and experience interactions. The brain is damaged and cannot be repaired. Drug and alcohol abuse leads to the severe impairment of academic, intellectual, and social skill development. Chemical abuse disables an adolescent's sense of ethical and social development because of the inability to make moral choices according to abstract concepts such as justice and social responsibility.

The following facts of direct and indirect consequences from adolescent substance abuse are taken from Health-At-Health. One very serious consequence of substance abuse in America is traffic related deaths. Approximately half of the deaths from all traffic related accidents involve alcohol and 18 percent (2.5 million) adolescents drive under the influence of alcohol. In addition to the cognitive and behavioral problems from substance abuse, which affect adolescents, other school related problems that occur with adolescent substance abuse is declining grades, higher incidences of school tardiness and school dropouts. Adolescents who use substances are more likely than nonusing

adolescents to have unprotected sex, to initiate sex at a younger age, to have multiple sex partners. These risky sexual practices place adolescents at a greater risk for unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) have reported many consequences on the user's mind and body: impairing short-term memory and comprehension, altering one's sense of time, and reducing the ability to perform tasks that require concentration and coordination (1998). Additional long-term effects include the increased use of lung cancer and other chronic lung disorders, cancers associated with the upper body, sterility in men, and infertility in women (CSAP, 1998).

With drug abuse, the brain is damaged and the impairment of academic, intellectual, and social skill development is, most times, irreversible. With the dramatic increase in adolescent chemical abuse and the permanency and severity of damage that can occur from using illicit substances, it is essential to find and begin successful prevention programs at an earlier age, as well as, successful intervention approaches to combating adolescent drug abuse.

Need for Successful AODA Prevention Programs

The 1996 National Education Longitudinal Study wrote in their findings "it takes repetition of the same no-use message in several formats to reach a majority of kids. Teaching young people life skills and refusal skills and helping them develop self-confidence are some of the approaches being used" (p. 34). This study noted the importance of the environmental and social factors that influence a child's decision to use or not to use.

The previously mentioned national and local statistics is an indicator that there is a desperate need to fight adolescent alcohol and drug abuse. Research findings are very clear about the fact of the longer that young people hold off from experimenting with alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, the greater the likelihood that they will not have substance use or abuse problems. The problem is that most children are not abstaining from the use of drugs and alcohol. The current prevention programs are not effective and the current adolescent treatment programs are not having an impact. The need for successful prevention programs is very great, especially because of the numerous factors contributing to adolescents who use chemicals.

There are many reasons why successful prevention programs are needed. First, adolescent chemical use is especially hard to combat because there is no single cause, but many factors, for drug abuse among adolescents. Some of the more prevalent factors include impulsiveness; insufficient parental supervision and monitoring; lack of communication and interaction between parents and kids; poorly defined and poorly communicated rules and expectations against drug use; inconsistent and excessively severe or non-existent discipline; perceived low harmfulness to use; favorable peer and parental attitudes toward adolescent alcohol and drug use; parental alcoholism or drug use; perception of extensive use by peers; psychological distress; and difficulty maintaining emotional stability (AAMFT, 2003).

These prevalent factors are reinforced through many channels including peers, parents, and the media's depiction of chemical use. It is essential to incorporate a successful preventative approach to drug and alcohol use because of the many factors that

lead to this problem and the overwhelming and unavoidable daily encounters and bombardment of chemical use behaviors and attitudes.

Secondly, adolescent substance abuse is hard to combat and successful prevention needed because adolescent drinking appears to be socially acceptable, and almost expected. The prevention of adolescent alcohol abuse is many times harder to combat than illegal drug use, however, both destructive behaviors are a leading cause for concern among adolescents (Lawson, 1992). Many times, Hollywood's portrayal of drug and alcohol use is glamorized and accepted. The Leadership Initiative's Prevention Guide reports that children draw conclusions about drug and alcohol-related social norms based from what they see and hear about in their families, communities, peers, and the media. These norms have a strong influence on children's' perception of the acceptance of drug and alcohol use. The media's influence is everywhere and an essentially unavoidable part of a teenager's life as the media is an important part of an adolescent's life.

Third, many AODA prevention programs and techniques have been tried, but to no avail. Numerous prevention programs have been in place but are not effective as is evident by the alarming increase in adolescent drug use. According to an expert in the field (Selekman, 1991, p. 4)

all across the country, numerous adolescent drug prevention programs have been created to help combat this growing epidemic. These programs are based heavily on the disease model of chemical dependency, which is frequently utilized in adult programs for alcoholics and drug addicts. Despite the numerous programs, there is very little outcome data that support these programs' effectiveness with adolescent substance abusers.

The disease based model approach to therapy, which has been used nationwide in treatment facilities, has proven to be ineffective. The main reason for this ineffectiveness is that this therapy approach does not take into an account the influence of social and situational factors, including values and attitudes, on drug and alcohol consumption.

The scare tactic technique for the prevention of chemical use has also been tried and yet been unsuccessful. *Reefer Madness*, released in 1937, was an anti-drug film that tried to portray a horrific story of the destruction of a young adult who had a great future ahead of him that was until he tried marijuana. This film's intent was to scare any potential drug users into not wanting to use drugs for the fear of having their lives destroyed. Like other early prevention “scare” techniques, this film's intended scare tactic to prevention had a repercussion that the film makers undoubtedly did not think of: *Reefer Madness* became a movie favorite among marijuana users.

An author (Peele) wrote about the reasons so many prevention techniques and treatment programs are failing. He found that many treatment facilities tell the client in treatment “their condition is inbred, lifelong, and irreversible” (1986, p. 23). With this type of philosophy, these treatment facilities are unknowingly giving the addicts an excuse for their behavior. This theory enforces the victim mentality in people, as well as, a belief that they have no control over what they do to self or others.

These same treatment facilities are teaching the clients to believe that to be successful in therapy means patients must accept that constant relapse is the only alternative to remaining in treatment the rest of their lives (Peele, 1986). Therefore, Peele (1986), wrote that the clients then believe that acceptance of therapy and its disease message almost guarantees relapse. The message that is being conveyed is, again, that

addicts have no control over their choices and do not need to be held accountable for the decisions that they make because it is not their fault.

With the failure of current AODA preventative programs and techniques, researchers are looking for a new way to reach adolescents before they became chemically dependent. In recent years, a lot of attention has been given to the idea of asset building, which incorporates the establishment of values and morals in adolescents as a preventative in AODA issues. Leffert (1996) stated “the work of the Search Institute has focused on developmental assets that youth need in their lives in order to be successful. The asset building approach is described as an approach that demonstrates that supportive and empowering relationships with peers, parents, and others adults tend to protect youth from high-risk behaviors” (1996, p.9) Leffert continued to write that people are increasingly recognizing the power of this new preventative approach that focuses on promoting the positive (1996).

Asset Building and Value Education

There were two very compelling studies done in the 1960's through the 1980's. Both of these studies had positive results stating that the more involved and invested youth are in their communities, families, schools, churches, and environment, the less likely they are to use chemicals.

From 1967 until 1972, a researcher in the field, Scott, worked with adolescents who have used and those who did not use alcohol and other drugs. He tested theories and came up with proven hypothesis as to why he felt some adolescents chose to use drugs and alcohol and why some chose to never use. There was one very common response

among the youth when Scott asked why they chose to use drugs or alcohol: teens use chemicals because they liked the experience that the mind-altering substance gave them. This experience could be useless, erroneous, harmful, or psychotic, but whatever the experience was, it took these individuals to a mind-altering state that was better than their sober state of mind. This researcher (Scott, 1972, p. 111) went on to state:

If teen-agers find experiences (happiness, meaning, involvement, joy, reality, consistency) in their lives that give them a feeling of purpose without the use of drugs, chances are great that they will not use drugs. The data of the present research suggest that numerous non-drug using teen-agers report no need to use drugs; they were happy and having an experience of a type that might be termed in-depth or growth or involvement by the ability to savor and enhance the natural, routine events of life, relationships, study, religion, family, nature, etc.

LaChance (1989) described the research studies of Cherry, 1987; Hirschi, 1969; Jessor, 1977; and the results from these three studies. In 1987 Cherry did a study that proposed a social bond theory derived from a combination of Hirschi's control theory and Jessor's problem behavior proneness theory. LaChance's study was done in hopes to provide information for substance abuse prevention planning. LaChance (1989, p. 29) writes about the results from this study:

young adults with strong bonds to their school, religious institutions, and their families drank much less than did students with weak or broken

bonds. The clear implication is that adolescents with close ties to their community and who are involved in church and family are less likely to drink heavily than are those who are not so involved.

LaChance (1989) described Cherry's results similarly to the results of Scott (1972) and to the theory involved in the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets. These results correlate with what the Search Institute has been advocating for many years now and proves that the coined term 40 Developmental Assets, in theory, has been around since the 1960's.

The Search Institute was founded in 1958, as an independent and non-profit organization that had a mission of advancing the well being of children and adolescents by generating knowledge and promoting its application (Search Institute History, 2003). The Search Institute accomplishes their mission by conducting research and developing publications and practical tools, by providing training and technical assistance (2003). The developmental assets are defined as representing the positive relationships, opportunities, skills, and values that promote the positive development of all children and adolescents.

The Search Institute's history and research efforts have found that the framework of developmental assets "steps back to look at the whole-to pull many pieces together into a comprehensive vision of what young people need to thrive" (2003, p.1). The developmental assets were formed from two types of applied research: prevention and resiliency. The prevention aspect focuses on protective factors that inhibit high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse, violence, sexual intercourse, and dropping out of school (Search Institute, 2003). The other research aspect is resiliency. This aspect

identifies factors that increase young people's ability to rebound in the face of adversity, from poverty to drug-abusing parents to dangerous neighborhoods (Search Institute, 2003).

Up until 1996, the Search Institute only identified 30 developmental assets. However, with the Search Institutes' extensive research, which included surveying more than 350,000 6th through 12th graders in more than 600 communities and conducting numerous informal discussions and focus groups, the 30 developmental assets were revised to the current model of 40 developmental assets (see Appendix A). In addition, the Institute has conducted and examined more than 800 studies and hundreds of other research publications that gave the Search Institute a comprehensive analysis of what the literature and researchers are saying in regards to adolescent development (2003). The research conducted has concluded that building assets for all groups, races, and ethnicities of adolescents is effective for reducing their risk behaviors.

The Search Institute (1997) expanded on the theory behind the developmental assets: the more assets youth have, the less likely they are to be at risk for use of illicit drugs, antisocial behavior, and risky sexual behavior, to name a few. The Youth Development Institute (YDI) (2002) went on to offer other reasons why asset building was good for adolescents. The higher number of assets youth have, the better able they are to cope and adapt to difficult events. The more assets that youth have, the better ability they have to develop attitudes, skills, and abilities they need to be good friends, family members, citizens, workers, and contributors to society. The theory behind the 40 developmental assets consists of the proven statement: the higher number of assets that adolescents have, the more likely they are to succeed. The 40 developmental assets are

identified as a strength based approach to the prevention and healthy development of adolescents.

The Institute defines the 40 developmental assets as based upon the everyday positive experiences, knowledge, characteristics that young people exhibit (2003). In addition these assets are powerful influences on adolescent behavior - both protecting young people from many different problem behaviors which lead to harmful and unhealthy choices, as well as, promoting positive attitudes and behaviors which contribute to the adolescents' being less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (Search Institute, 2003). The Search Institute's research found that high school students who report positive values along with social support and high expectations from school, parents, and the community are much more likely to avoid risky behaviors, including drug and alcohol use, and are more likely to do very well in school.

These 40 common developmental assets that have been identified are separated into two categories of assets: internal and external. The external assets focus on the healthy and positive experiences that adolescents receive from the people and institutions within their lives. External assets are the first 20 of the 40 assets and include the asset type category of support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and structured time use. The Institute's Power of Assets described the four categories of external assets included in the framework (2003):

Support - Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.

Empowerment - Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.

Boundaries and Expectations - Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds" or "out of bounds."

Constructive Use of Time - Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home.

Internal assets are numbered 21 – 40 and include the asset type categories of educational commitments, values, social competencies, and positive identities. The Institute's Power of Assets describes these internal assets that help an individual thrive competently and responsibly when on one's own by encouraging the qualities that guide choices and the sense of purpose and focus (2003). The Institute (2003) identifies the internal assets as:

Commitment to Learning - Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.

Positive Values - Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices.

Social Competencies - Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.

Positive Identity - Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Asset building encourages youth to develop their values. The importance that youth place on values is a strong indicator of resiliency and refusal skills that teens will be able to assert in risky situations. Values are developed through the same way assets are: positive relationships and communication with parents, good adult role modeling, positive peer influence, and positive community connections.

Value identification is incorporated in the 40 developmental assets: many of the assets involve youth defining and understanding their values and morals by identifying skills needed to succeed in life. Once assets are established and values identified, character development emerges and protects young people from destructive behaviors, like substance abuse.

Value education works hand in hand with the developmental assets toward the common goal of having adolescents grow into healthy adults through reducing their at-risk factors. In the Book of Virtues, moral education is described by Bennett as cited in Jacobs (2002, p. 147):

The training of heart and mind toward the good – involves many things. It involves rules and precepts – the dos and the don'ts of life with others – as well as explicit instructions, exhortations, and training. If we want our children to possess the traits of character we most admire, we need to teach them what those traits are and why they deserve both admiration and allegiance.

Teaching children to adopt positive traits and good values is at times a controversial issue because it may be looked upon as something that should be left up to parents. Also, teaching values is sometimes considered controversial because there are many differences over numerous moral issues. However, there are many values and morals that can be identified as non-controversial: respect, tolerance, responsibility, self-control, and honesty, just to name a few. Adolescents need to learn these values and can be taught these values by all community members, not just educators in the schools and parents in the home.

Just the same as the 40 developmental assets, the teaching of values needs to be a community-wide effort. Regardless of the controversy, researchers (Jacobs, 2002; Duffy, 2000; Veugelers, 2000) have found that teaching value education to adolescents aid in the prevention of alcohol and other drug abuse.

The higher number of assets correlates with the advanced development of values. Moral education concentrates on explicit ideas about values, the cognitive processes involved, and learning how to think critically. A successful value education program should concentrate on the assertiveness, refusal, and the healthy decision-making skills needed to succeed in life and against negative peer pressures. Experts in the field (Marcus & Fritzer, 1999) found that not only is value education helping adolescents to overcome value confusion, it also helps youth to become more positive, purposeful, and productive.

Asset building and value education are powerful influences on today's youth. The more assets youth have, the better developed their assets are and the more protection that youth will have from making harmful or unhealthy choices. In addition to

‘protecting’ youth from making unhealthy and unsafe choices, the more assets youth have and values identified will increase the youths’ positive behaviors and choices.

This positive and effective influence that asset building has on youth is shown by the following chart taken from the Search Institute’s research for the power of assets (2003). The results for this chart are based on surveys of over 217,000 6th-to 12th-grade youth in 318 communities and 33 states during the 1999-2000 school year (Search Institute, 2003).

This first chart demonstrates that the fewer assets that youth have the more likely they are to engage in problem behaviors and having a negative attitude.

	0 – 10 Assets	11- 20 Assets	21-30 Assets	31- 40 Assets
Problem Alcohol Use	49 %	27 %	11 %	3 %
Violence	61 %	38 %	19 %	7 %
Illicit Drug Use	39 %	18 %	6 %	1 %
Sexual Activity	32 %	21 %	11 %	3 %

The second chart illustrates that youth with higher number of assets are the least likely to engage in patterns of high-risk behaviors and will have positive attitudes.

	0 – 10 Assets	11- 20 Assets	21-30 Assets	31- 40 Assets
Exhibits Leadership	50 %	65 %	77 %	85 %
Maintains Good Health	26 %	47 %	69 %	89 %
Values Diversity	36 %	57 %	74 %	88 %
Succeeds in School	8 %	17 %	30 %	47 %

With as much evidence in support of asset building and the numerous resources that are readily available, it is a tragedy that most of the young people surveyed do not experience even half of the assets. Ideally, all youth will experience at least 31 of the 40 developmental assets. Yet as research shows, only eight percent of the youth surveyed experience this high level of assets. The Institute (2003) reports that the average adolescent surveyed only experiences 18 of the 40 assets. In addition, 62 percent of young people surveyed experienced fewer than 20 of the 40 assets and 30 percent surveyed experienced between 21 – 30 assets (2003). The Institute's survey shows that the younger generation in the United States are not experiencing and do not have in their

lives many of the skills and basic building blocks for the healthy development needed to be successful.

Although this study focuses on asset building, it is important to note that in addition to the 40 developmental assets, the Search Institute identified and measured 10 roadblocks to developing assets, which in turn is a roadblock to success. These roadblocks are also called developmental deficits (risk factors) (Roehlkepartain & Leffert, 2000). These developmental deficits are different from the developmental assets. The development of assets focuses more on all children and youth, not only those children and youth who are at a high risk of negative outcomes (Search Institute, 2003). The developmental deficits are the risks in children's lives that inhibit asset building. The more deficits children have, the less likely it is that they will build large number of assets. As a result, these young people will be much more likely to make negative decisions and choices.

According to the research (Roehlkepartain & Leffert, 2000) the deficits for building assets are: 1.) Spending two or more hours a day at home alone without an adult. 2.) Putting a lot of emphasis on selfish values. 3.) Watching more than three hours of television a day. 4.) Going to parties where friends will be drinking alcohol. 5.) Feeling stress or pressure most or all of the time. 6.) Being physically abused by an adult. 7.) Being sexually abused. 8.) Having a parent who has a problem with alcohol or other drugs. 9.) Feeling socially isolated from people who provide care, support, and understanding. 10.) Having a lot of close friends who often get into trouble.

Just as asset building is vital for the development of healthy, successful, and responsible youth, it is equally important to reduce the deficit factors in the lives of these

at-risk youth. The Search Institute reported that there are five things that seem to make the most difference for young people with deficits: 1.) Getting them involved in structured, adult-led activities. 2.) Setting boundaries and limits. 3.) Nurturing a strong commitment to education. 4.) Providing support and care in all areas of their lives, not just in the family. 5.) Cultivating positive values and concerns for others. Like asset building, reducing the developmental deficits of at-risk youth is the responsibility of all community members, not just parents (2000).

Parental Involvement

It is no surprise that the biggest deposit of assets and the development of character typically come from parental and familial influences. Authors Pevser and McLaughlin (1997) have identified the following 25 suggestions for parents to model for supporting the development and growth of assets and values in their children.

1. Be authentic and model good character in the home. For instance, parents who refuse to cheat on income tax or who don't take unfair advantage of people who have greater credibility with their children.
2. Make clear statements about values and beliefs to children. Let them know what is acceptable and what is not.
3. Show respect for all people, especially, spouses, children and other family members. Teach children to treat others with courtesy and respect, and to practice sensitivity and empathy.
4. Model and teach children good manners and insist that all family members use good manners.

5. Demonstrate and encourage healthy ways to resolve conflict both inside and outside of the home.
6. Have family meals together (without television) as often as possible. Use this opportunity to talk with all family members, especially the children and listen to their concerns.
7. Plan as many family activities as possible. Be sure to involve all family members in the planning of activities. Value everyone's recommendations.
8. Model appropriate and responsible behaviors in regards to drugs and alcohol. Do not provide access to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.
9. Worship together as a family. Adolescents with religious beliefs and convictions are less likely to drop out of school and engage in risky behaviors.
10. Plan family service projects or civic activities. Simple things such as volunteering at a shelter or mowing the yard for an elderly neighbor.
11. Encourage young people to read and take initiative to read to them.
12. Limit children's spending of money. Help them to appreciate non-material rewards.
13. Discuss the holidays, the history of the day, and the importance the day has for the family.
14. Share your heroes with your children. Explain the character traits in the admired person.

15. Use situations that occur in the community or in the world to start discussions on important issues. Capitalize on the teachable moments.
16. Allow young people to solve their own day-to-day problems.
17. Assign home responsibilities for all family members.
18. Set clear expectations for young people and consistently hold them accountable for their actions. Make sure they know the rules and consequences for their actions.
19. Reward wise decisions and desirable behaviors that are in adolescents.
20. Provide positive activities with adequate supervision.
21. Learn to say no and to follow through.
22. Refuse to cover or make excuses for inappropriate behavior.
23. Know where your children are, who they are with, and what they are doing. Insist on meeting their friends and their parents.
24. Pay attention to the music, television shows, videos, and movies that are being viewed.
25. Remember that you are the parent. Adolescents do not need another friend. They need parents who care enough to set and enforce appropriate limits for their behavior (Pevser & McLaughlin, 1997).

The Search Institute recognizes that not all children will come from strong families with caring, loving people and systems of support surrounding them. Many children will not experience a home environment where their emotional, mental, and physical health is being nurtured in a way that is conducive for success. When young

people do not have a good support system within the home, the school and community become the next hope for them to feel a sense of connectedness, affirmation, and security; as well as a greater chance to thrive. Therefore, it is essential for professional educators and other community members to understand their vital role in diminishing deficits and building assets in all young people.

Educational Involvement

The Search Institute identified 13 developmental assets that are noted as being the most important for student success in schools are described by experts in the field, Scales and Taccogna (2000). The 13 developmental assets that have been identified are: school engagement; achievement motivation; positive peer influence; involvement of youth programs, clubs, or organizations at school, and/or in community organizations; bonding to school; school boundaries; homework; interpersonal competence; relationships with other adults; high expectations; parental involvement in school; caring school climate; and reading for pleasure. The researchers, Scales and Taccogna (2000), wrote that schools which are committed to building assets in their students should have districts that will be involved in coordinating the efforts to five main areas of schooling: curriculum and instruction; school organization; co-curricular programs; community partnerships; and support services.

The research of the Search Institute as cited by Scales and Taccogna (2000) described the following five main areas of schooling. Curriculum and instruction involves cross-curricular integration, team teaching, implementing extra-curricular programs of high interest to keep adolescents engaged, helping teachers to coordinate and

monitor homework, providing opportunities for young people to establish positive adult relationships. Providing opportunities for students to be involved in service learning projects is a great way for schools to build assets. The curriculum and instruction aspect in asset building schools have an all-inclusive health education curricula. As well as incorporating instructional activities that continually teach and reinforce skill building especially in the areas of communication, social, decision-making, and planning.

School organization involves arranging for middle to large sized schools to have smaller groups, more commonly called houses, teams, or pods. When organizing schools into teams, it is advised that students keep the same teams with the same supervising adult. Establishing a well-organized advisor / advisee program aids in having a more organized school. Allowing for students to have choices in school operations, such as decision-making and rule and consequence development builds on the empowerment assets.

A school that desires to build assets in the students will offer many co-curricular programs. These before and after school programs offer a large variety of opportunities where youth can develop assets. Many of the extra curricular activities especially support the development of social and emotional intelligences, leadership skills, and even more opportunities for service learning, all of which are great ways to build assets in students.

Establishing community partnerships is another area to incorporate within the schools to build assets. Community partnerships are partnerships of students with families, neighbors, volunteers, business people, and other community members. When community members and organizations are involved, the message that young people are valued and important is reinforced.

It was concluded for the fifth aspect of schooling to be in the area of providing competent support services to students. The services are typically offered through health services and guidance and counseling services and provide care, encouragement, and resources to the student and family. Some examples in how these services can be implemented is through establishing and maintaining an on-site family resource center; creating programs for an easier transition for students from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school, as well as a program for new transfer students to have an easier transition to the school and community.

A school that incorporates asset building in all five areas of schooling build and reinforce assets in the students through developing interpersonal competencies, establishing feelings of value and connectedness to their community. In addition, asset-building schools enhance the empowerment assets, ensure consistency in boundaries and expectations, increases intrinsic motivation, and supports the value and social competencies categories (Scales and Taccogna, 2003).

Between parental and educational involvement, many of the 40 developmental assets will be reached. However, to ensure that maximum assets are built in our youth, all members of the community need to be involved.

Community-wide Involvement

Hillary Clinton made famous the African proverb “it takes a village to raise a child.” This statement holds so much truth. Families, schools, congregations, neighborhoods, youth organizations, institutions, other organizations in the community, and individual community members play a very big role in the development of young

people today. Everyone can build assets and everyone should build assets. It is not solely the responsibility of parents to be modeling positive behavior and encouraging young people. The responsibility involves every community member taking initiative for raising young people – to be teaching children values and morals and ensuring that they have as many assets as possible.

This teaching can be done and is most successful once every community member understands their role in building assets among the younger generation. As determined as some parents are, they cannot build assets for all 40 developmental assets since some of the assets can only be developed through community interaction. Therefore, it is vital that communities understand the importance of building assets in the younger generation.

The Search Institute (1997) asserted that if communities and schools can measure assets, then they could move to enhance the deficient assets for youth, which would reduce youths' at-risk status. The developmental framework of asset building emphasizes mobilizing all community residents to play roles in collectively nurturing young people (Benson et al, 1998).

The Youth Development Institute (2002) explained benefits to a community when members got involved in asset building. The positive focus of asset building rubbed off on all parts of community life, making the entire community feel more positive and connected. Getting involved in asset building helps businesses and other organizations because it supports employees in both their parenting and their community involvement. Research (YDI, 2002; Benson et al, 1998) has found that communities have advanced to recognizing the importance of developmental asset building and value education as a key preventative measure in regard to AODA use among adolescents.

It is important to know that asset building is not a quick fix, nor will the desired changes happen over night, however, with determination and a shift in thinking from a problem focus to a positive vision every community can launch a movement that will change the way communities think about and respond to adolescents and their development. This movement will take determination and a strong, long-term commitment over years to make asset building a natural way of life for and interaction with young people. In the initial stages, community-wide involvement in asset building for adolescents may seem overwhelming and without enough support and involvement for this new vision. However small asset building efforts may seem, the outcome and potential for the healthy development of children is too awesome to ignore.

Taking Action to Build Assets (TABA) research results for community wide involvement in the development of young people has come up with ideas for communities to begin the process of launching this movement (2003). Just as no one community encounters the same problems with their youth, asset building will be unique to each community. Although asset building will look a little different in each community, there are underlying themes in asset building that hold true for all communities (TABA, 2003). The following six key themes are identified by Taking Action to Build Assets for what is needed in all communities for the involvement of members in asset building for its young people (2003).

Assets are nurtured in all young people. Rather than focusing primarily on specific groups of young people for intervention (for example, those at-risk), asset-building communities embrace and intentionally seek to nourish all young people.

Relationships are key. Rather than defining themselves primarily in terms of programs, asset-building communities view themselves more in terms of relationships. Initially, programs may be developed to create connections in neighborhoods, schools, businesses, congregations, and other settings across all generations. Programs then become less central as natural relationships, networks, and activities emerge to care for youth.

Everyone contributes to the vision. In an asset-building community, caring for young people is not the sole responsibility of families or schools or professional care providers. All residents – parents, neighbors, young people, educators, business people, senior citizens, congregation members, and others – see themselves as guardians of the community’s young people.

Asset building never stops. Asset building begins before birth by equipping parents-to-be with skills and continues at least until young people become independent adults. At each developmental stage, the community emphasizes different assets that respond to the young person’s needs. Furthermore, the community explores how to nurture the assets that adults need.

The community is filled with consistent messages. Asset-building communities have harmony in the messages that young people hear. These consistent messages can be developed by using the language of asset building for describing relationships, activities, and programs. By using consistent messages, people constantly hear that young people are a priority in the community.

Duplication and repetition are valued. People need to hear a message several times before they fully grasp and act on it, the asset-building community knows that

young people need to experience many expressions of care, guidance, and opportunities in all areas of community life. Rather than delegating one part of asset building to a particular segment of the community, the whole community recognizes its responsibility in strengthening the whole asset foundation (2003).

Building upon the 40 developmental assets, together with value education, there is hope for our future generations of adolescents and in their prevention against alcohol and other drug abuse. The combination of community wide involvement in building assets and values in young people is becoming the best weapon in fighting chemical dependency in today's youth.

CHAPTER THREE

Summary, Analysis, Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was two fold. The first purpose was to examine the impact of asset building and value education in AODA prevention among adolescents. The second purpose was to perform a critical analysis of information in this area and to formulate a set of recommendations to parents, community members, and professional educators.

Summary

America can now claim another title on the list of being a nation in first place: the United States has the highest level of drug use among young people of any developed country in the world (LaChance, 1984). There are numerous possible reasons and combinations of factors for the alarming rise in adolescent drug and alcohol use: everyday stressors of being an adolescent, as well as the pressures and stress from parents, society, and peers.

Youth in America are experiencing more pressures from parents, society, and peers than ever before: pressures to look a certain way, to wear certain clothes, to act in what is deemed appropriate, to do well in school, to be accepted and regarded highly by peers. Some of the pressures could be considered positive pressure, however, a lot of the pressures are negative. Besides the many pressures that youth face, thousands of young people are living in chaotic or abusive environments with no stability, consistency, or positive role models to emulate.

In addition to the lack of parental role models, is the lack of positive role models and behaviors shown in the media. Studies on the media's portrayal of drug and alcohol use has concluded that many times, drug and alcohol use is portrayed in an exciting, no consequence, relatively harmless, and glamorized manner. This portrayal gives the perception that drugs are not really that bad or destructive. Whether one uses drugs for socializing, relaxing, having fun, forgetting about problems, or helping to cope with stress, the perception given is that drugs are not a big deal and this issue should not be a cause for concern. The media is such a prevalent influence in adolescents' life. The behaviors and perceptions given in the media have a huge impact on the opinions of adolescents and in the shaping of their reality.

Like the media's influence, the power of peer beliefs and values has a significant impact on the formation of adolescent identity and opinion. Peers are most often the prevailing and persistent voice for whether or not adolescents will use chemicals. Peer acceptance is strongly desired by and has a powerful effect on young people's thought process.

Because of the many possible reasons for adolescent chemical abuse, there are many prevention and intervention techniques that have been implemented in hopes to combat this national tragedy. However, the prevention and intervention programs, as a whole, have not been effective or successful.

The Search Institute's research of what contributes to children growing into successful adults has lead the way to the widely accepted and emergent concept of the 40 developmental assets and asset building for the desired transition from adolescence into happy and healthy adults. Asset building is based on the 40 developmental assets and is

a strength-based approach to the prevention and healthy development of adolescents. Asset building, in combination with value education, has made great progress in deterring adolescent substance abuse.

The Search Institute's research has concluded the more assets young people have the less likely they will be to engage in risky behaviors such as unprotected sex and use of drugs and alcohol. Just the same, the more assets adolescents have the more likely they will do very well in their personal, social, school, and professional settings. The good news is that everyone can be an asset builder for the younger generation.

Analysis

From the author's experience of talking with community members and educators in the field, many people feel that asset building is a 'good thing' and starts once a child reaches adolescence. It is important to realize that asset building starts from birth. The Search Institute (2003) offers the following general suggestions to build assets starting with infants through high school age young adults.

To build assets in infants: smile at every newborn; spend as much time as possible holding babies and interacting with them; realize babies do not manipulate adults, respond to their cries and needs; prop up babies so they can see their surroundings more; realize babies don't intentionally violate standards and boundaries; don't punish babies for violating boundaries that they can not understand; distract babies from inappropriate behaviors; and, draw attention to the desired behaviors.

Continue building assets in infants through being flexible with infant schedules and gradually introduce predictable routines as babies get older; having babies spend

most of their time with their parents, other consistent family members and consistent care givers; giving babies new, interesting things to look at such as toys in different sizes, shapes, and colors; and, reading and singing to babies everyday.

The suggested ways identified for asset building in toddlers: cheer children as they master new skills; comfort and guide children when they become frustrated; ensure safety by childproofing all environments where children play; start introducing the value of community service by having children do simple tasks at home, such as putting a toy away in a toy box or picking up socks; give simple, understandable boundaries, such as 'sit down' or 'don't bite;' enforce boundaries consistently so children do not become confused; affirm children when they act appropriately; have a balance of stimulating, structured time with free playtime; have consistent times form children to sleep, eat, play, and relax; bring toddlers to new places, such as parks and stores; and make up a game or song for children that teaches them the names of objects.

To build assets in preschool age children there are many things that can be done: get down to children's eye level when interacting with them; encourage children's thinking abilities by taking them to new age appropriate situations; let children experience new sounds, sights, tastes, textures, and smells; stay calm when children act out in highly emotional ways; model how you want children to act – don't just tell them what to do or what not to do; follow children's leads in which activities interest them; talk about what you see whenever you are with children and ask them to talk about what they see; and, visit libraries, zoos, museums, any other place that give children new experiences.

Assets can be built in elementary age children by many ways: encouraging children's passions and interests; answering their questions; showing children they are still loved and cared for when adults and children disagree; asking children to say what they like and do not like in their daily routine and make changes to improve them; and, being firm about boundaries that keep children safe and healthy and don't negotiate with these boundaries.

Additional ways to build assets in elementary age children are through challenging them to do their best and offer help whenever it is acceptable; teaching elementary age children to balance their time so they learn how not to get too busy or bored; allowing children to have one or two regular out-of-home activities that are led by caring adults; and, showing children that you are proud of their attempts and accomplishments.

Ideas for building assets in middle and high school age youth were identified as the following: being available to listen; affirming independence and interdependence; finding out what adolescents care about and advocate for them; asking teenagers for their opinions and advice; showing and recognizing ways youth make differences by serving others; encouraging youth to make a difference; and, setting clear boundaries. Further suggestions to build assets in youth include encouraging teenagers to volunteer in the community; talking with youth about their fears, hopes, and feelings; and, supporting and encouraging young people to take leadership positions.

Building assets in adolescents are continued through being calm, consistent, and patient; negotiating boundaries and teaching teenagers how to set their own boundaries by discussing beliefs about values, morals, and character; being involved in teenagers'

lives by knowing who they are with, where they are going, and what they will be doing; helping young adults to set goals and discovering their career interests; continuing to have boundaries for appropriate behaviors and consequences for inappropriate and unacceptable behaviors; encouraging teens to be involved in positive, stimulating activities that match their talents, interests, and abilities; showing interest in the young persons life by asking them to teach you new idea, skill, or concept; and, placing an interest on adapting the lifetime learning, not just graduation, philosophy are all great ways to build assets in teenagers (Search Institute, 2003).

Recommendations

As a result of the conclusions from this study, the author suggests the following recommendations.

1. It is recommended that asset building begin before birth by making the information for understanding the 40 developmental assets readily available in the community for all individuals. This can be accomplished through parent-to-be education classes offered at various places in the community, as well as, having this information shared in pre-natal doctor's appointments.
2. It is recommended that the court system get involved by ordering any parents and parents-to-be who are brought before the judge, no matter what the charge, to attend parent education classes on the 40 developmental assets as part of the sentencing.
3. It is recommended that information about the 40 developmental assets, ideally, be incorporated into a general education college class requirement for all students.

This requirement would heighten the awareness of the successful preventative approach to the development of youth and the necessity of community wide involvement in this healthy development. In addition, this requirement would offer information that will be useful throughout the lifespan and in all aspects of life.

4. It is recommended that all post secondary classes for majors in any program leading to a job working in an educational setting or a job working with children in any sort of way, mandate the programs to include in their curriculum, classes that teach professions how to build assets and the importance of building assets in our future generations.
5. It is recommended for all K-12 schools to systematically incorporate asset-building strategies within the school community and across all of the previously mentioned five main areas of schooling. All school personnel need to be educated about the developmental assets and begin to incorporate this knowledge into their everyday curriculum and interactions with students.
6. It is recommended that all K-12 guidance counselors incorporate asset building activities and lessons into all developmental guidance curriculum plans, so that every activity will build upon assets in the students.
7. It is recommended for all people in every community to begin building assets in every youth they encounter: doing something as simple as saying hello to a teenager is a good start.

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40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

APPENDIX A



40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



Category	Asset Name and Definition	
External Assets	Support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. 	
	Empowerment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. 	
	Boundaries & Expectations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. 	
	Constructive Use of Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. 	
	Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
		Positive Values <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
		Social Competencies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and Decision Making-Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence-Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution-Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
		Positive Identity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal Power-Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose-Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future-Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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