



A service of the
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Youth Supports

A resource to encourage and empower youth
leaders for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom.

February 2002 - Volume 3, Issue 2

- What Are Youth Assets and What Good Are They?
- Kaleidoscope!

What Are Youth Assets and What Good Are They?

The day comes when every youth worker, lay worker and professional alike, realizes: "I can't do this by myself!" Unfortunately, there exists in many congregations the mentality that having a youth worker will solve all the problems that the youth of that particular congregation will ever experience. These two truths can lead to a great deal of frustration within a congregation. While I am all for youth having staff with whom youth can relate and turn to in times of stress and distress, a "one person" youth ministry never has worked and never will.

Youth ministry is a unique ministry in many ways. But it is also simple, straightforward ministry in many ways as well. A key part of Jesus' thinking on ministry can be summed up in building relationships with people and caring for them in those relationships. In the same way young people need adults from whom they can experience care and support. *But how do adults get involved in the lives of young people?* One of the most exciting concepts in ministry I have come across in many years provides a wonderful way to start!

Search Institute is an organization that has developed the concept of *developmental assets* by conducting research on youth across the United States. This research focuses on positive things young people need to grow up healthy, principled, and caring. Over the years this research has been conducted, forty of these positive *developmental assets* have surfaced. Across the nation, youth who possess a greater number of these assets make more healthy and committed choices while young people who don't have as many tend to exhibit more "at risk" behavior including premature sexual activity, anti-social behavior and violence, alcohol and other drug use. Obviously this information should make having these assets present in our young people a huge priority, but unfortunately, the research also indicates that the average young person only has about eighteen of the forty assets. The first step in making use of this information is knowing what the assets are. There are twenty external and twenty internal. Each of these is separated into four categories. Here are the forty listed in their categories:

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EXTERNAL ASSETS			
SUPPORT	EMPOWERMENT	BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS	CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME
1. Family Support	7. Community values youth	11. Family boundaries	17. Creative activities
2. Positive family communication	8. Youth as resources	12. School boundaries	18. Youth programs
3. Other adult relationships	9. Service to others	13. Neighborhood boundaries	19. Religious community
4. Caring neighborhood	10. Safety	14. Adult role models	20. Time at home
5. Caring school climate		15. Positive peer influence	
6. Parent involvement in schooling		16. High expectations	
INTERNAL ASSETS			
COMMITMENT TO LEARNING	POSITIVE VALUES	SOCIAL COMPETENCIES	POSITIVE IDENTITY
21. Achievement motivation	26. Caring	32. Planning and decision making	37. Personal power
22. School engagement	27. Equality and social justice	33. Interpersonal competence	38. Self-esteem
23. Homework	28. Integrity	34. Cultural competence	39. Sense of purpose
24. Bonding to school	29. Honesty	35. Resistance skills	40. Positive view of personal future
25. Reading for pleasure	30. Responsibility	36. Peaceful conflict resolution	
	31. Restraint		

These building blocks are tools by which we may guide young people to make healthy positive choices. I pray that this “wets” some appetites for next month’s follow up article in which I will share some possible ways to implement using these assets to inform and inspire your congregational members to action!

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Find past issues of Youth Supports at:
<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/ysupportslist.html>

K-scope!

Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope is a great week long youth event for up to 4 youth per congregation. You can read and see photos about it at

<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/YTalk/April00/yt0004a.html>

This year’s K-Scope is scheduled for July 7-12 at the Christ Lutheran Retreat Center at Belfair, WA (Hood Canal area). Registration cost is \$140. Contact Pastor John Schmidt at Kscopenow@cs.com or (253) 584-2565 for more information!

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