



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

HELPING YOUTH THRIVE

**A Profile of Santa Clara County
Elementary School Students**

Executive Summary

**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**

A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative



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The Developmental Assets Survey: Young People Talk About Growing Up in Silicon Valley

In Fall 2010, Project Cornerstone administered a survey to 38,000 students in more than 200 schools and 25 districts throughout Santa Clara County. The survey measures developmental assets—the positive values, relationships, and experiences that youth need to thrive. Research proves that the more assets youth possess, the more likely they are to choose healthy activities, succeed in school, and avoid risk behaviors. Conversely, youth with fewer assets are more likely to engage in risk behaviors and fail to achieve at school. The survey also measures risk behaviors and thriving indicators, and correlates them with the presence or absence of developmental assets.

Project Cornerstone previously administered the developmental assets survey in 1999 and 2004. The 1999 survey, administered to 6,800 youth, generated community interest to begin our countywide efforts to increase developmental asset levels and resulted in the creation of our School Partnerships Program, which now serves nearly 150 schools, 1,500 adult volunteers, and more than 30,000 students. The 2004 survey, administered to 13,700 youth, resulted in additional community partnerships and increased school participation in asset-building programs.

We are pleased to release the results of our recent countywide survey to the community. The survey results provide current data about the developmental asset levels, risk behaviors, and thriving indicators of Silicon Valley youth. These help the community understand the ways that we are successful at raising healthy, responsible young people and where we must improve. Because developmental asset levels are directly correlated with academic achievement, school districts and schools are especially interested in better understanding their students' strengths and weaknesses so they can develop strategies to help all of their students succeed.

This document contains executive summaries of the survey results for elementary school students, middle school students, and high school students. To view the full reports, please visit www.projectcornerstone.org.

By providing current data about our youth throughout the community, we hope to renew and revitalize Silicon Valley's commitment to developing healthy, caring, and responsible children and youth.

The 2011 developmental assets survey was funded in by the United States Department of Education (US DOE). Of the \$169,500 survey budget, the US DOE contributed \$143,000, or 84% of the total cost. Non-government sources provided \$26,500, or 16% of the total cost.

*Developmental Assets:
A Profile of Your 4th - 6th Grade Students*

Me and My World

Executive Summary

Santa Clara County
San Jose, CA

Prepared for:
Project Cornerstone
San Jose, CA
Revised May 2011

Search Institute
SURVEY
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Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your 4th - 6th Grade Students

Santa Clara County

Search Institute's framework of Developmental Assets provides a tool for assessing the health and well-being of upper elementary-age children. The asset framework represents a common core of developmental building blocks crucial for all youth, regardless of community size, region of the country, gender, family economics, or race/ethnicity. This report summarizes the extent to which children in your community experience these assets and how the assets relate to their behavior. These 40 Developmental Assets were assessed in Revised May, 2011 using the survey *Me and My World*.

The following table describes the students in your community who participated in the study.

Demographics of Students Surveyed			
		Number of Students	Percent of Total
Total Sample		13377	100
Gender*	Male	6445	50
	Female	6556	50
Grade*	4	5302	41
	5	6303	48
	6	1470	11
Race / Ethnicity*	American Indian or Alaska Native	221	2
	Asian	2662	21
	Black or African American	263	2
	Hispanic or Latino/Latina	2383	18
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	116	1
	White	4206	33
	Other	1336	10
	Multi-racial	1751	14
*Numbers may not sum to "Total Sample" due to missing information. Less than 0.5% rounded to zero.			

The Developmental Assets are grouped into two major types (see Figures 1 and 2). **External assets** are the networks of support, opportunities and people that stimulate and nurture positive development in children. **Internal assets** are the young person's own commitments, values, and competencies. Figures 1 and 2 provide the percentage of all students in your study reporting each asset.

Figure 1: External Assets

Percent of Your Students Reporting Each of 20 External Assets			
Asset Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Support	1. Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support.	88
	2. Positive family communication	Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s).	63
	3. Other adult relationships	Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s).	53
	4. Caring neighborhood	Child experiences caring neighbors.	52
	5. Caring school climate	Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging school environment.	65
	6. Parent involvement in schooling	Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.	52
Empowerment	7. Community values youth	Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community.	33
	8. Children as resources	Child is included in decisions at home and in the community.	53
	9. Service to others	Child has opportunities to help others in the community.	32
	10. Safety	Child feels safe at home, at school, and in her or his neighborhood.	62
Boundaries and Expectations	11. Family boundaries	Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors the child's whereabouts.	60
	12. School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.	87
	13. Neighborhood boundaries	Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring the child's behavior.	49
	14. Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults in the child's family, as well as nonfamily adults, model positive, responsible behavior.	52
	15. Positive peer influence	Child's closest friends model positive, responsible behavior.	91
	16. High expectations	Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities.	92
Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative activities	Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week.	66
	18. Child programs	Child participates two or more times per week in cocurricular school activities or structured community programs for children.	56
	19. Religious community	Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week.	50
	20. Time at home	Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games.	31

Figure 2: Internal Assets

Percent of Your Students Reporting Each of 20 Internal Assets			
Asset Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation	Child is motivated and strives to do well in school.	78
	22. Learning engagement	Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school.	62
	23. Homework	Child usually hands in homework on time.	84
	24. Bonding to adults at school	Child cares about teachers and other adults at school.	83
	25. Reading for pleasure	Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week.	63
Positive Values	26. Caring	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people.	87
	27. Equality and social justice	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people.	71
	28. Integrity	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one's beliefs.	83
	29. Honesty	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth.	89
	30. Responsibility	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behavior.	84
	31. Healthy lifestyle	Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality.	84
Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision making	Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions.	54
	33. Interpersonal competence	Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her- or himself.	54
	34. Cultural competence	Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity.	69
	35. Resistance skills	Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things.	79
	36. Peaceful conflict resolution	Child attempts to resolve conflict nonviolently.	85
	Positive Identity	37. Personal power	Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life.
38. Self-esteem		Child likes and is proud to be the person he or she is.	66
39. Sense of purpose		Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life.	48
40. Positive view of personal future		Child is optimistic about her or his personal future.	61

Figure 3: Average Number of 40 Assets Your Children Report

Most young people in the United States—regardless of age, gender, or region of the country—experience too few of the 40 assets. Search Institute's research on adolescents consistently has shown a small, but observable, decrease in assets among older adolescents (9th – 12th grade youth) as compared with young adolescents (6th – 8th grade youth). Early research on students in middle childhood suggest that this trend—*younger children reporting more assets than older children*—continues among 4th – 6th graders. See page 9 of the Full Report for a detailed discussion of this issue. Here is the average number of assets reported by youth in your community at each grade level.

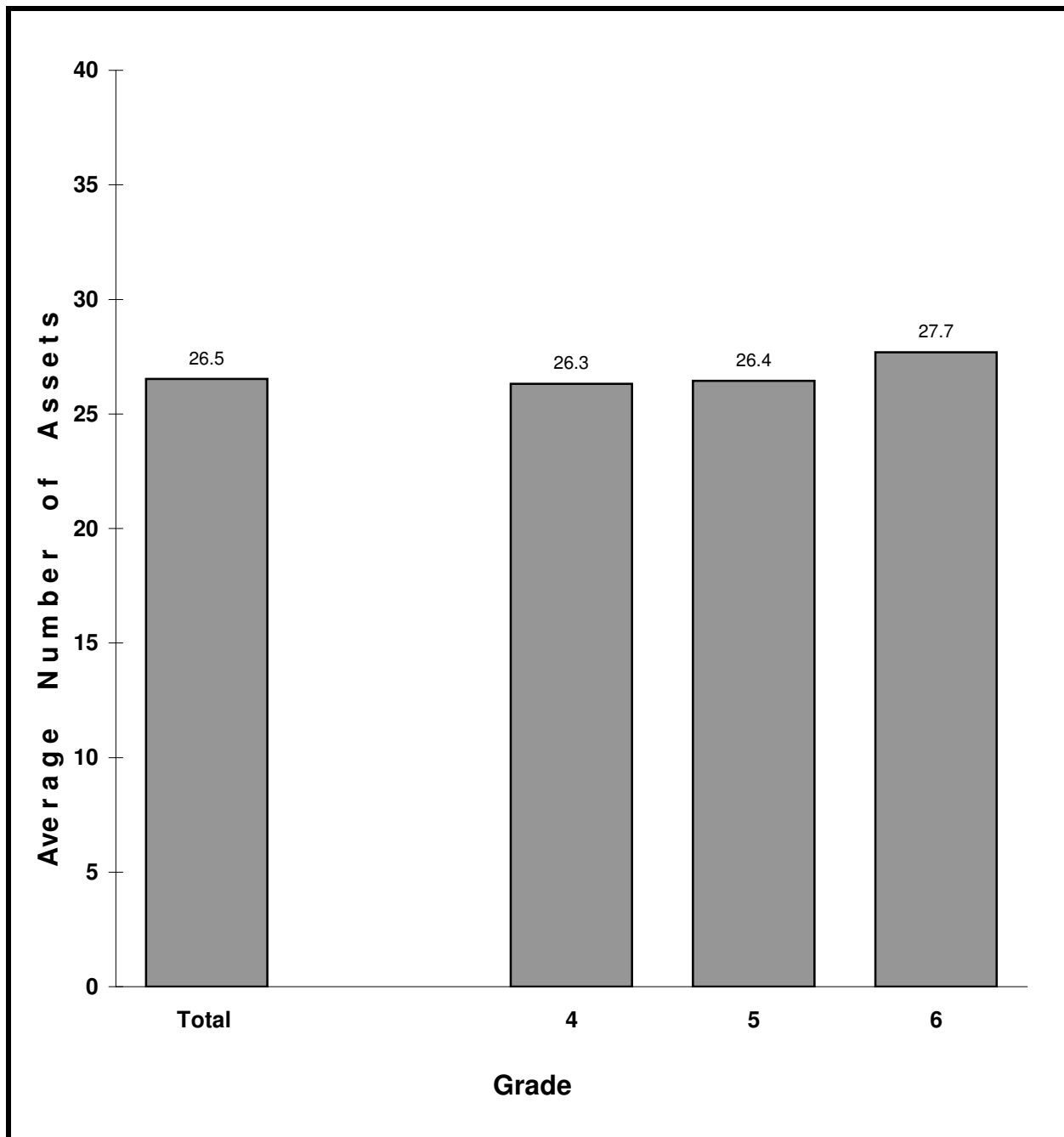


Figure 4: The Challenge for Your Community

Ideally, of course, all youth would experience 31-40 of these assets. Each community needs to establish a goal for what percentage of youth it seeks to be at this level. This process can provide an important opportunity for creating a community vision for your youth. The figure below shows the percentage of your youth who experience each of four levels of assets: 0-10, 11-20, 21-30, and 31-40.

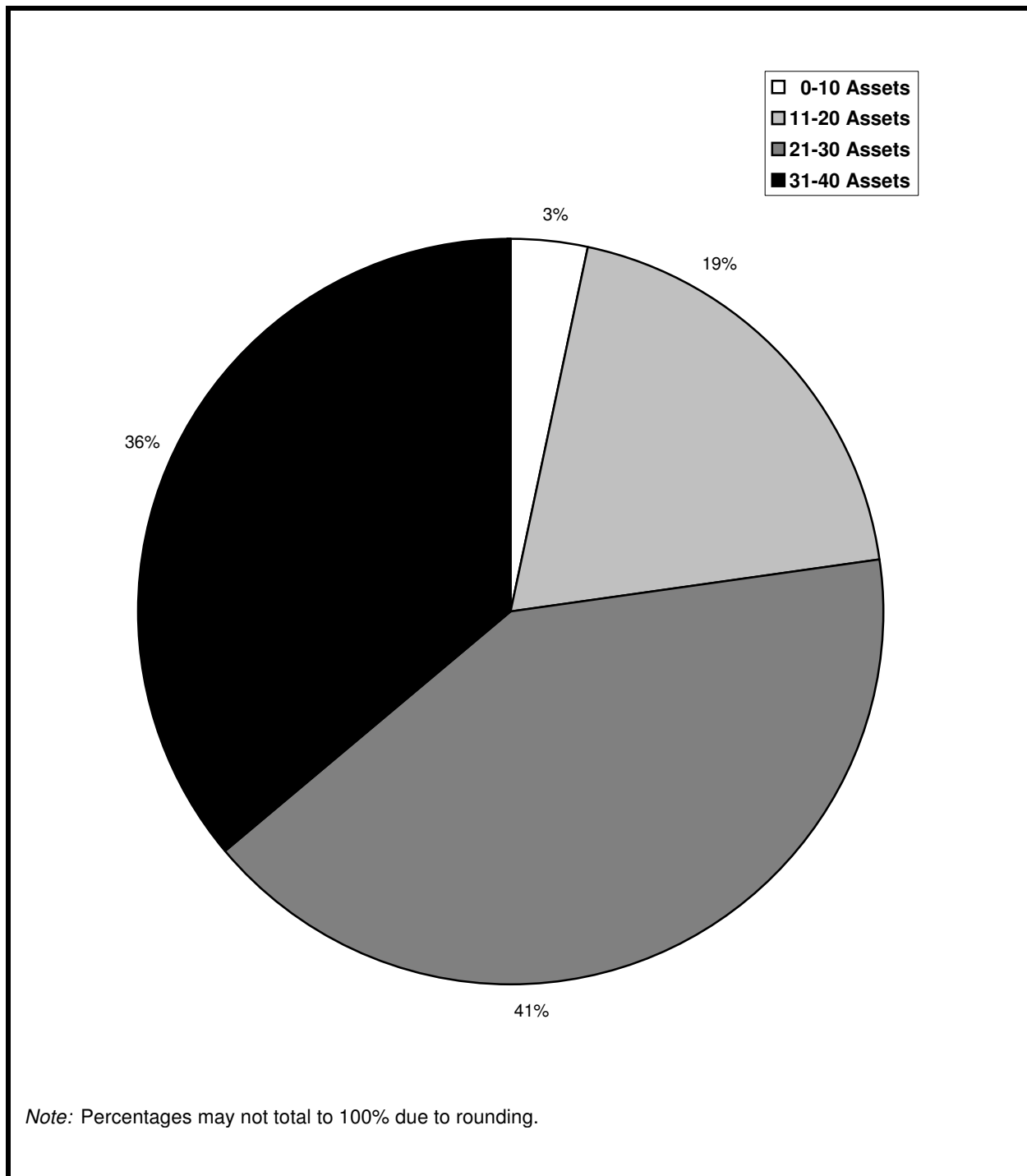


Figure 5: The Power of Assets to Protect Against Risk Behavior Patterns

This figure shows the power of assets to protect youth from risk behavior patterns. Search Institute's research consistently shows that youth with higher levels of assets are involved in fewer risk taking behaviors. Each vertical bar shows the *average number of 6 risk behavior patterns among all youth, grouped by asset level (0-10, 11-20, 21-30, and 31-40)*. The 6 risk behavior patterns are: alcohol use, smoking, marijuana use, anti-social behavior, physical aggression/violence, and sadness.

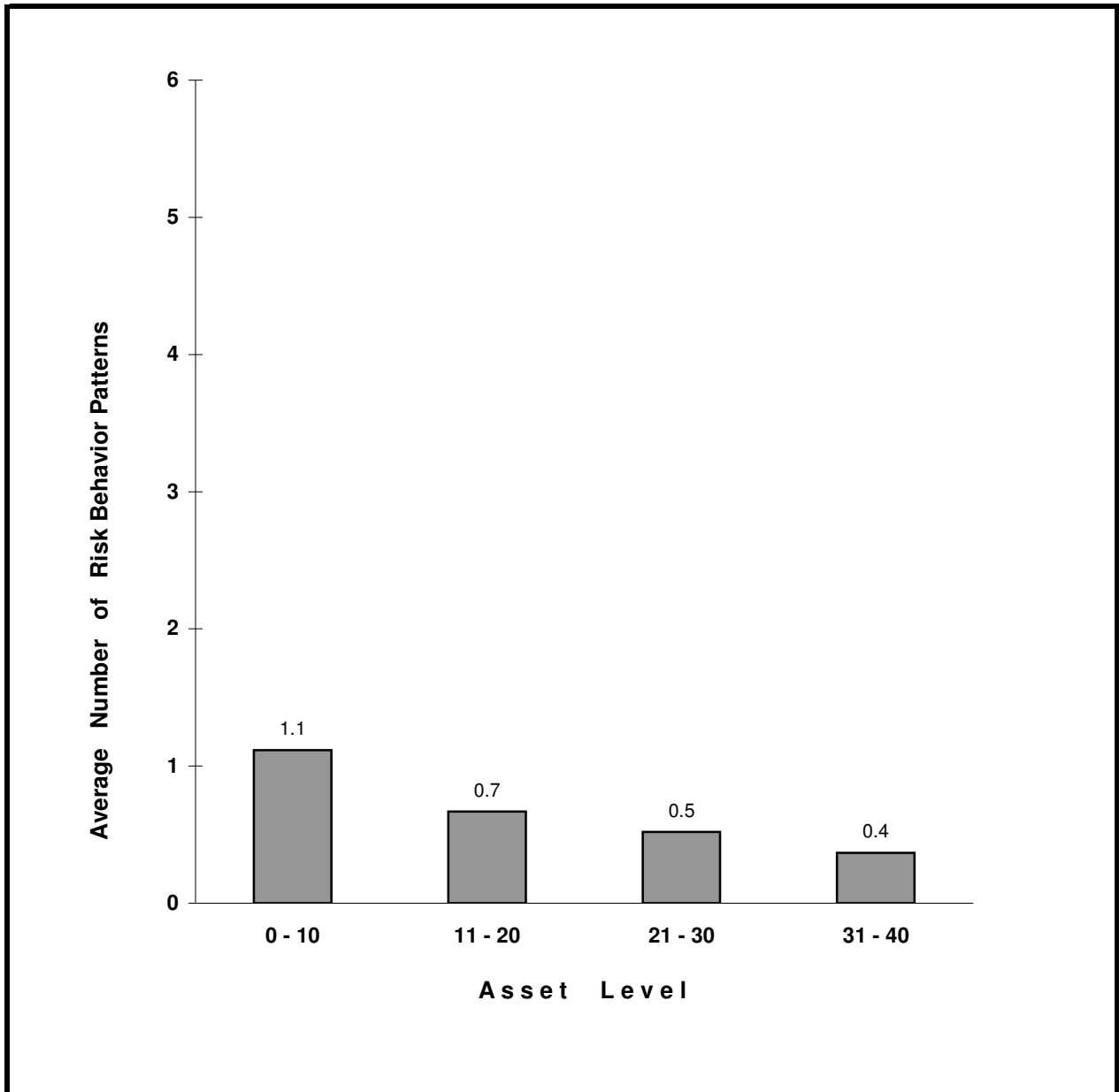
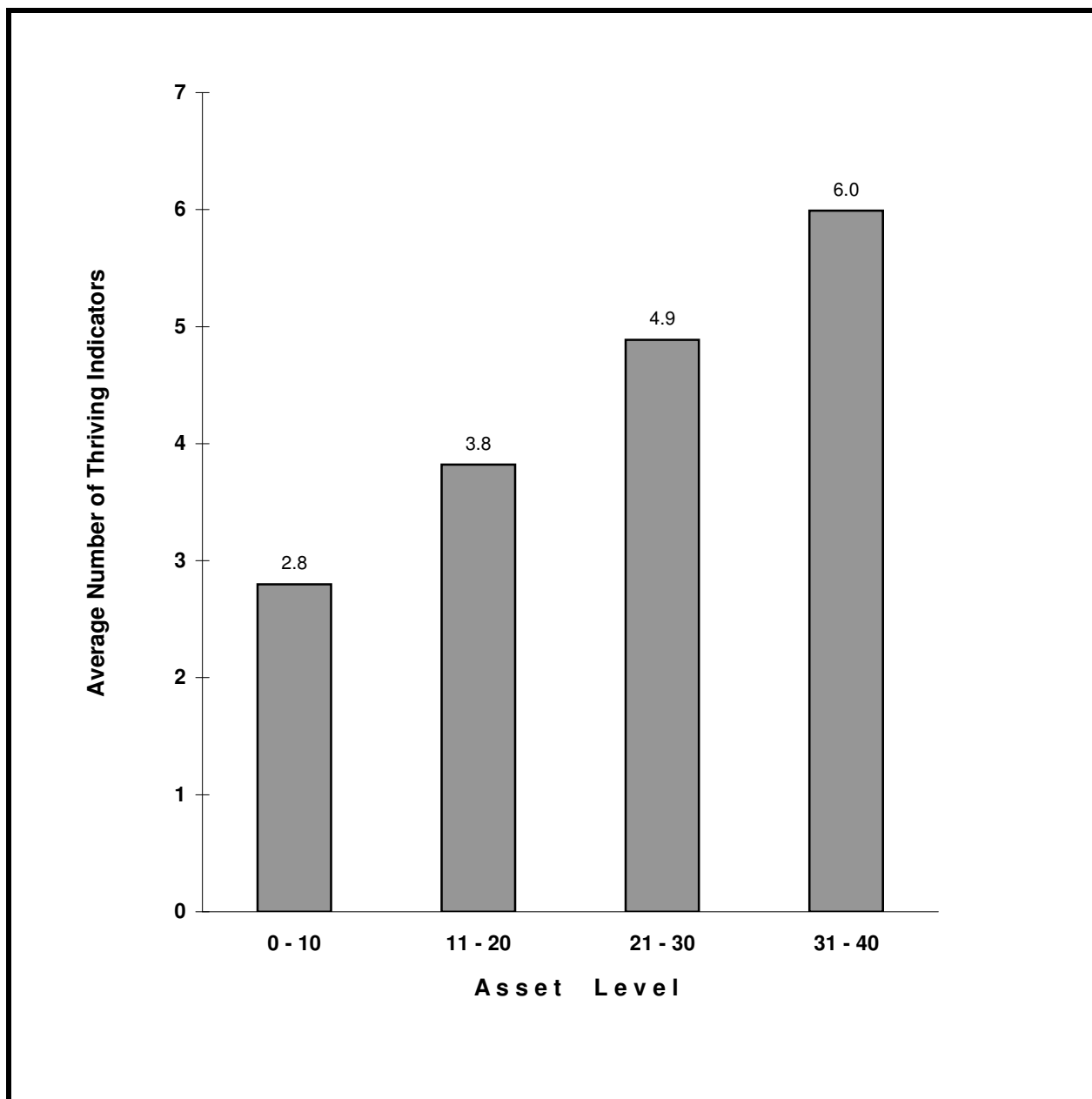


Figure 6: The Power of Assets to Promote Thriving Indicators

This figure shows the power of assets to promote thriving indicators among your youth. Search Institute's research consistently shows that youth with higher levels of assets are more likely to report more thriving indicators. Each vertical bar shows the *average number of seven thriving indicators among all youth, grouped by asset level (0-10, 11-20, 21-30, and 31-40)*. The seven thriving indicators are: school success, helps others, values diversity, delays gratification, coregulation, coping, and life satisfaction.



What Next? Moving from Awareness to Action

This report provides insights about the young people in your community and can be a powerful tool for community-wide discussion about how to improve the well-being of your youth. The good news is that everyone—parents, grandparents, educators, neighborhoods, children, teenagers, youth workers, employers, health care providers, coaches, and others—can build assets. Ideally, the whole community is involved to ensure that young people have the solid foundation they need to become tomorrow's competent, caring adults. Here are some suggestions for how to begin strengthening the assets among the youth in your community.

What adults can do . . .

- Smile at every child or adolescent you see.
- Send a "thinking of you" or birthday card, letter, or e-mail message to a child or adolescent.
- Invite a young person you know to do something together, such as playing a game or going to a park.

What young people can do . . .

- Ask your parent(s) to help you take advantage of interesting and challenging opportunities through youth programs, cocurricular activities, and congregational youth programs.
- Find a teacher you like at school and get to know her or him better.
- Find opportunities to build relationships with younger children such as service projects or tutoring.

What families can do . . .

- Model—and talk about—your own values and priorities.
- Regularly do things with your child, including projects around your house, recreational activities, and service projects.
- Talk to your children about assets. Ask them for suggestions of ways to strengthen theirs and yours.

What organizations can do . . .

- Highlight, develop, expand, or support programs designed to build assets, such as mentoring, peer helping, service-learning, or parent education.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute to others in and through your organization.
- Develop employee policies that encourage asset building, including flexible work schedules for parents as well as other employees, so that they can volunteer in youth development programs.

For more information about what you can do to build assets or start an asset-building initiative in your community, call Search Institute at 1 - 800 - 888-7828.

If available, the name and phone number of a local contact person or initiative appears below.

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**Project Cornerstone is an initiative
of the YMCA of Silicon Valley**

To view all Santa Clara County
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