



Asset-Building Ideas for Neighbors and Neighborhood Groups

A neighborhood is more than a place where people sleep or grab a bite to eat. A neighborhood can and should be an important community in which people of all ages feel cared for and secure. This kind of neighborhood isn't the norm in most communities, but with a focus on asset building it could be. Thro of the 40 developmental assets (#4: caring neighborhood; and #13: neighborhood boundaries) focus specifically on the important role neighbors have in building assets. Here are ideas on how neighbors can build these and other assets:

Individuals

- ~ **Learn the names of kids who live around you.** Find out what interests them.
- ~ **Treat neighbors of all ages with respect and courtesy;** expect them to treat you with respect and courtesy too.
- ~ **If you live in an apartment or condominium, spend time in gathering places,** such as front steps, courtyards, meeting rooms, pools, laundry rooms, and lobbies. Greet and talk with others there. If you have a front yard, hang out there.
- ~ Take **personal responsibility for building asset #13: neighborhood boundaries;** when you see someone in the neighborhood doing something you think is inappropriate, talk to her or him about why it bothers you.
- ~ **Find other neighbors who want to make a long-term commitment to asset building.** Begin developing strategies for working together to build assets in your neighborhood.
- ~ **Take time to play or just be with the young people** on your block or in your building. Encourage them to talk ~nd then listen to what they have to say.
- ~ **If you have children, talk to other parents about the boundaries and expectations they have for their children.**
Discuss how you can support one another in areas where you agree.
- ~ **Figure out what you can provide for young people in your neighborhood.** Can you set up a basketball hoop? Can you offer some space for a neighborhood garden? Can you give one hour of your time on weekends to play softball with young people who live near you?
- ~ **If you have concerns about your neighborhood, talk wftH other neighbors about your feelings.** If others share your concerns, gather a group to work on addressing them. Even if you don't solve all of the problems, you'll strengthen your neighborhood through the process.
- ~ **Attend a game, play, or event** that a neighborhood child or teenager is involved in. Congratulate the young person after the event.
- ~ **Be aware of graduations and other major events** in the lives of children.