



Asset-Building Ideas

for Parents and Guardians

Being a parent or guardian can be very hard work—no surprise there, right? Most parents and guardians have things they love about their role as well as problems with their kids that they have to deal with. What might be surprising, though, is that one of the best ways to deal with problems is to focus on positives. Research shows that a more effective approach to raising healthy, competent kids is to concentrate on building developmental assets. These assets form the foundation young people need to make healthy choices and to succeed in life. The more assets your kids have, the stronger this foundation will be.

There are probably lots of asset-building things you already do for your children—even if you don't call them that. Here are some ways to be intentional about asset building:

- ~ **Post the list of 40 developmental assets on your refrigerator door. Each day, do** at least one asset-building thing for each family member.
- ~ **Connect with other parents who are interested in asset building.** Form relationships in your neighborhood, on the job, through a congregation, or through a parent-education organization.
- ~ **Regularly do things with your child,** including projects around the house, recreational activities, and service projects. Take turns planning activities to do together as a family.
- ~ **Eat at least one meal together as a family** every day
- ~ **Negotiate family rules and consequences for** breaking those rules.
- ~ **Develop a family mission statement that** focuses on building assets. Then use it to help you make family decisions and set priorities.
- ~ **Nurture your own assets** by spending time with people who care about you and are supportive. Also, take opportunities to learn new things, contribute to your community and have fun. You'll take better care of your children if you take care of yourself.
- ~ **Think about the way you were parented** and how that affects your relationships with your children. If there are parts of your relationship with your parents that were very difficult or that get in the way of your parenting, consider talking with someone about these issues~,
- ~ **Don't let anyone in your family (including you) watch too much television.** Find other interesting and meaningful activities for your children to do—some with you, some with their friends, some by themselves.
- ~ **Learn as much as you can about what your kids need at their current ages.**