



## Media Alert

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### **President of County Board of Supervisors Dave Cortese Announces Countywide Data, Sets New Goal for Thriving Youth in Santa Clara County**

President of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors Dave Cortese gave the keynote speech at Project Cornerstone's Asset Champions Awards Breakfast on Thursday, March 24, 2011. Cortese announced the highlights of new data gathered by Project Cornerstone's countywide survey of more than 36,000 fourth through twelfth graders in more than 200 schools and 16 districts.

The survey measured *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.

Survey results revealed that 52 percent of Santa Clara County seventh through twelfth graders have 21 or more assets, such as caring school climate, adult role models, positive peer influence, and commitment to learning. Thirty-nine percent of youth are considered vulnerable, with between 11 and 20 assets, and 12 percent of students are at-risk, with ten or fewer assets. Cortese also presented data correlating asset levels with risk behaviors and thriving indicators. For example, **54 percent of high school students in the at-risk group with ten or fewer assets drank alcohol in the past 30 days, compared to only 20 percent of students with 21 or more assets.** Conversely, 91 percent of students with 31 or more assets report making an effort to maintain good health, compared to only 28 percent of at-risk students.

In closing, Cortese reconfirmed his commitment to Santa Clara County's "Year of the Child" (announced previously at the 2011 State of the County address) by setting a goal for two-thirds of all Santa Clara County youth to have 21 or more assets, and for no young people in Santa Clara County to fall into the at-risk category.

For more information about the developmental assets and the 2011 Santa Clara County youth survey, including full reports for elementary, middle and high school students, visit [www.projectcornerstone.org](http://www.projectcornerstone.org).