

Search Institute

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## Development Assets®

In 1990, Search Institute released framework for development assets, which identifies a set of skills, experiences, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful and contributing adults. Over the following decades, the Developmental Assets framework and approach to youth development became the most frequently cited and widely utilized in the world, creating what Stanford University's William Damon described as a "sea change" in adolescent development.

Data collected from Search Institute surveys of more than 5 million children and youth from all backgrounds and situations has consistently demonstrated that the more Developmental Assets young people acquire, the better their chances of succeeding in school and becoming happy, healthy, and contributing members of their communities and society.

There is growing recognition that youth programs and interventions will have limited impact if they focus only on risks and vulnerabilities. Strength based approaches have been found to be empowering and effective in multiple contexts. Search Institute's framework of Developmental Assets® offers a promising, research based, culturally adaptable framework, measurement tools, and action guides that bring a positive, holistic development lens to work with children, youth, families, and communities around the world.

## Developmental Relationships (share article)

Search Institute's newest research-to-practice initiative will focus on studying and strengthening the developmental relationships that help young people succeed. A developmental relationship helps young people attain the psychological and social skills that are essential for success in education and in life. Young people can form these relationships with their parents and family members, with their friends and peers, with staff members in their schools and programs, and with caring adults in their neighborhoods and communities.

Over the past two decades, researchers at Search Institute have shown that developmental relationships in young people's lives are important. The number and intensity of developmental relationships in young people's lives is linked to a range of positive educational outcomes. Relationships with caring adults and peers can increase student engagement and improve academic motivation. Students who experience developmental relationships:

- get better grades,
- have higher aspirations for the future,
- And participate in college-preparatory activities more frequently

### **The Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)** (share sample report)

Measuring young peoples' internal strengths and external supports and their growth in these key areas over time.

Do you wish that your school, program, or community had access to data that could help you answer the following questions about the young people you care about and serve?

- Do they feel surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate, and accept them?
- Do they feel valued, valuable, and safe?
- Do they feel that they have been provided with clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to always do their best?
- Do they have opportunities outside of school to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults?
- Do they understand the lasting importance of learning and believe in their own abilities?
- Are they developing strong guiding values that will help them make healthy life choices, including responsibility, empathy, and self-control?
- Do they have the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations?
- Do they believe in their own self-worth and feel that they have control over the things that happen to them?

Data from the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) survey has been helping organizations and partnerships answer these questions since 2005. To date, more than 600,000 young people in between the ages of 8 and 18 have taken the DAP, making it one of the most used instruments in the world for measuring the internal strengths and external supports that influence a youth's success in school and in life. Multiple studies have demonstrated that the DAP measures those strengths and supports in valid and reliable ways.

When DAP data is combined with data on attendance, achievement, and other factors, it is possible to gain a more complete picture of young people's lives. That more complete picture makes it possible to design and implement better strategies to prepare young people to thrive in some type of college, a high-skill career, and citizenship.