



Memorandum

TO: ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE
COMMITTEE

FROM: Sara L. Hensley

SUBJECT: REPORT ON PROJECT
CORNERSTONE STUDENT SURVEY

DATE: 02-24-05

Approved

Date

3/2/05

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a report on Project Cornerstone's latest student survey.

BACKGROUND

Project Cornerstone is Santa Clara County's initiative to implement Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, the research-based framework of healthy child and youth development. Project Cornerstone was founded in 1999 by the Youth Alliance of Santa Clara County, a collaboration of nine major, prevention-focused, youth-serving agencies that provide direct programming to nearly 200,000 children and youth annually. Project Cornerstone has grown to include nearly 100 organizations and many individuals from all sectors of the community working together to shift from simply reacting to children and youth as problems to connecting with them so they thrive.

Developmental Assets are the positive relationships, opportunities, values and skills that young people need to grow up caring and responsible. Research shows that the more assets young people have the more likely they are to thrive and the less likely they are to be involved in negative behaviors and attitudes. It is the responsibility of the community to guide and support young people to experience these assets, and the assets approach provides us with a blueprint for building strong communities.

The 40 Developmental Assets approach has been designated as a Foundational Model by the National Recreation and Park Association. Locally, the City has incorporated this philosophy into documents such as the Youth Services Blueprint, the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Strategic Plan, and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services grant applications. Currently the City is working with Project Cornerstone to provide training and assistance in implementing the developmental assets through the Recreation and Cultural Services City Service Area.

In November 1999, Project Cornerstone initiated its first county-wide student survey of nearly 7,000 students in the 7th through 12th grades. In October 2004, Project Cornerstone partnered with 95 schools to survey nearly 14,000 students in the 4 – 12th grades to gain an updated report on what it is like to grow up in our community. At the March 10, 2005 meeting, Akemi Flynn, Executive Director of Project Cornerstone, will present key findings from the recent survey results and recommendations for taking action to build assets to support all our children and youth to thrive.

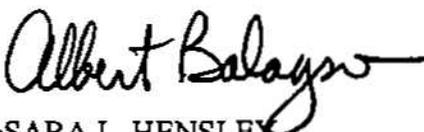
Attached is Project Cornerstone's Developmental Assets 2005 Survey Results packet. The full survey reports are available at www.projectcornerstone.org.

COST IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COORDINATION

This report was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.


for SARA L. HENSLEY
Director of Parks, Recreation
and Neighborhood Services

Attachment: Developmental Assets 2005 Survey Results

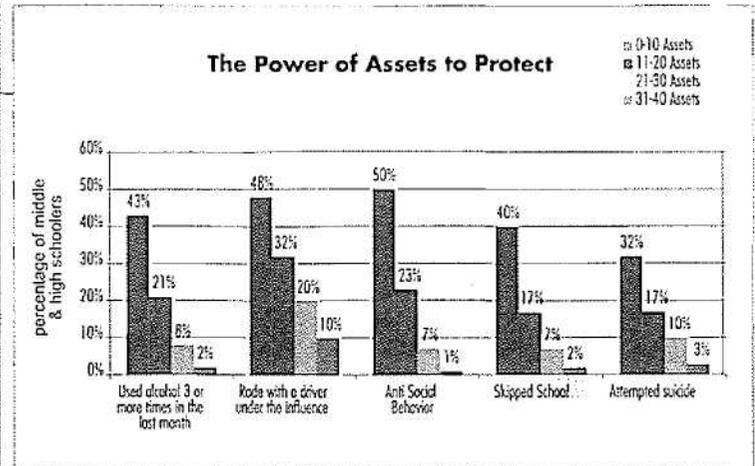
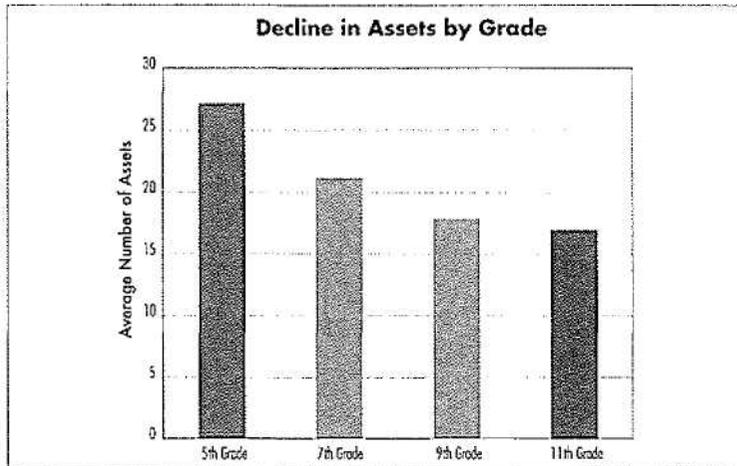
Project Cornerstone recently surveyed nearly 14,000 4th-12th graders at 95 schools across Santa Clara County to learn about their experiences growing up in our community by measuring the students' levels of developmental assets. The results provide a report card for us, as a community, showing how well we support the healthy development of our children and youth.



Developmental assets are the positive relationships, opportunities, values and skills that young people need to grow up caring and responsible. Most people think of assets in terms of property or financial resources. Developmental assets are far more valuable than that. Building developmental assets is the best investment we can make for our young people and our entire community.



SURVEY RESULTS



ASSET BUILDING

make a difference!

A Call for Asset Builders

In Santa Clara County, all our children and youth need more assets. Middle and high school students have an average of only 18.8 of the 40 assets. 4th-6th graders have an average of 26.8, and there is a steady decline as they get older (top left).

Each of us has the power to be asset builders for children and youth. We can make a difference and change their current experience:

- Only 18% of middle and high schoolers and 35% of 4-6th graders feel that the community values children and youth.
- Only 26% of middle and high schoolers report they have opportunities for useful roles in the community. This is a drop from 55% of 4-6th graders.
- Only 26% of middle and high schoolers and 56% of 4-6th graders report having positive adult role models.
- In contrast, 88% of 4-6th graders and 68% of middle and high schoolers report positive peer influence.

Answer the Call

We need to let children and youth know they are important and valued members of our community. Young people need consistent, caring relationships and positive interactions with adults. Adults need to value and support positive peer relationships among children and youth. As a community, we need to encourage children, youth and adults to work in partnership.

Through our personal behavior and our community programs and policies, we must guide young people to develop the relationships, skills and values they need to cope with challenges and experience success today and into adulthood.

Create the Thriving Zone

National research and our own local data demonstrates that as young people experience more assets they make more positive, healthy choices and are better able to thrive. Young people with fewer assets are significantly more likely to be involved in negative, high-risk behavior (top right).

- 38% of 4-6th graders and 8% of middle and high schoolers have 31 or more assets – they're in the "thriving zone"!
- That means that 72% of 4-6th graders and 92% of middle and high schoolers don't have the assets they need to thrive.

Sustain Asset Building as Children & Youth Grow Up

Our new survey results highlight how we, as individuals and a community, currently drop out of the lives of young people as they become teenagers.

While, it is developmentally appropriate for youth to need greater independence from their families as they grow older, we, as a community, seem to be walking away from them at a time when they still need our support and guidance. The following survey results highlight the significant decline in asset levels and community support as children grow into teenagers:

- 62% of 4-6th graders experience caring school climates, but only 25% of middle and high schoolers report caring school climates.

Imagine if 75% of adults did not feel cared about and encouraged at work – how productive would they be?

- 91% of 4-6th graders feel their parents and teachers have high expectations for them. Only 46% of middle and high schoolers do.

We need to start off right by intentionally building assets with young children and then focus on sustaining and increasing our positive relationships and interactions with youth as they grow older.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

Through nation-wide research, Search Institute has identified the Developmental Assets (shown below) as the essential building blocks of healthy child and youth development. The percentages shown next to each asset represents the portion of nearly 14,000 Santa Clara County children and youth that experience each asset.

4th - 6th
Graders

Middle & High
Schoolers

EXTERNAL ASSETS

SUPPORT

1. Family Support – family life provides high levels of love and support	89%	66%
2. Positive Family Communication – young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s)	63%	30%
3. Other Adult Relationships – young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults	54%	38%
4. Caring Neighborhood – young person experiences caring neighbors	52%	34%
5. Caring School Climate – school provides a caring, encouraging environment	62%	25%
6. Parent Involvement in Schooling – parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school	55%	31%

EMPOWERMENT

7. Community Values Children & Youth – young person perceives that adults in the community value children & youth	35%	18%
8. Youth as Resources – young people are given useful roles in the community	55%	26%
9. Service to Others – young person serves in the community one hour or more per week	36%	43%
10. Safety – young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood	57%	45%

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

11. Family Boundaries – family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts	65%	46%
12. School Boundaries – school provides clear rules and consequences	88%	56%
13. Neighborhood Boundaries – neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior	53%	44%
14. Adult Role Models – parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior	56%	25%
15. Positive Peer Influence – young person's best friends model responsible behavior	88%	68%
16. High Expectations – both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well	91%	46%

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

17. Creative Activities – young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts	63%	23%
18. Youth Programs – young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community	53%	54%
19. Religious Community – young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution	56%	46%
20. Time at Home (see definitions for different age groups in full reports)	39%	60%

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

21. Achievement Motivation – young person is motivated to do well in school	80%	68%
22. School Engagement – young person is actively engaged in learning	65%	59%
23. Homework – young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day	81%	72%
24. Bonding to School – young person cares about her or his school	81%	57%
25. Reading for Pleasure – young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week	63%	23%

POSITIVE VALUES

26. Caring – young person places high value on helping other people	87%	52%
27. Equality and Social Justice – young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty	69%	58%
28. Integrity – young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs	82%	67%
29. Honesty – young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy"	89%	66%
30. Responsibility – young person accepts and takes personal responsibility	84%	64%
31. Restraint – young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs	85%	49%

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

32. Planning and Decision Making – young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices	56%	30%
33. Interpersonal Competence – young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills	52%	44%
34. Cultural Competence – young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds	71%	48%
35. Resistance Skills – young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations	80%	43%
36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution – young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently	85%	45%

POSITIVE IDENTITY

37. Personal Power – young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me"	63%	36%
38. Self-Esteem – young person reports having a high self-esteem	65%	42%
39. Sense of Purpose – young person reports that "my life has a purpose"	54%	52%
40. Positive View of Personal Future – young person is optimistic about her/his personal future	60%	68%
41. Positive Cultural Identity* – young person feels comfortable with and proud of her/his identity, including but not limited to disabilities, ethnicity, faith/religion, family status, gender, language and sexual orientation		

*Project Cornerstone established this asset through local community input.

For more information visit www.projectcornerstone.org or www.searchinstitute.org

INTERNAL ASSETS

Asset-Building Investments Pay Off

Many individuals and organizations have put asset-building into action over the last five years since the first developmental assets survey was conducted with Santa Clara County middle and high schoolers. Their efforts are making a difference. More of our young people report more assets than before. Twenty-seven of the 40 assets have increased including:

- Positive family communication
- Parent involvement in schooling
- School boundaries
- High expectations from parents and teachers

We truly can make a difference, especially when we work together to intentionally build developmental assets with children and youth. For example, a school that has partnered with Project Cornerstone and led its own asset-building efforts with educators and students achieved the following:

- 21% increase in asset 5 – caring school climate
- Decrease in 20 of 24 risk behaviors, such as substance abuse, fighting and truancy
- 21 point increase in API scores

Now, our challenge is to close the gaps and raise the bar so ALL of our young people experience the assets they need to thrive!

Full survey reports are available at www.projectcornerstone.org

About Project Cornerstone



**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**

Project Cornerstone is the Santa Clara County-wide collaborative working to mobilize our entire community to shift from simply reacting to children and youth as problems to connecting with them so they thrive. As a catalyst for change, Project Cornerstone aims to ensure that every aspect of our diverse community – individuals, businesses, community organizations, schools and government – understand and embrace the fact that interacting with young people is important...and that *every interaction makes a difference.*

For more information about how you can join our asset-building movement, please visit www.projectcornerstone.org or call (408) 351-6482.



The Opportunity to Make a Difference

Here are some asset-building ideas everyone can put into action:

- ✓ Recognize and build on the strengths of young people rather than simply reacting to problems.
- ✓ Walk your talk – model the behavior you expect from others.
- ✓ Support young people to choose positive friends with whom they can develop and practice important skills and values.
- ✓ Help young people to connect with positive adults who offer support and encouragement – this is important at all ages and especially during adolescence when it is normal and healthy for teens to need increasing independence from their parents and families.
- ✓ Challenge adults to work in partnership with young people. Encourage children and youth to get involved, speak up and contribute their ideas and energy to help others and strengthen the community – even young children need opportunities to play important roles in their families, schools and communities.

Thanks

The following school districts and the Santa Clara County Juvenile Probation Department contributed to and participated in the survey:

Alum Rock School District
 Campbell Elementary School District
 Campbell Union High School District
 Franklin McKinley School District
 San Jose Unified School District
 Moreland School District
 Morgan Hill Unified School District
 Mount Pleasant School District
 Mountain View-Whisman School District
 Mountain View-Los Altos High School District
 St. Martin's of Sunnyvale
 Union School District

Developmental Assets Survey Sponsors



United Way Silicon Valley



YMCA of Santa Clara Valley
 We build strong kids,
 strong families, strong communities.

