

Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth

Executive Summary and Complete Survey Report

Results from the Search Institute Survey

Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors

**Northern Saskatchewan Schools
Northern Saskatchewan, SK
May 2010**

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Contents

Section		Page
1	Executive Summary	1–1
2	Developmental Assets: A Model of Positive Human Development	2–1
3	Portrait of Developmental Assets	3–1
4	Thriving and Risk-Taking Indicators	4–1
5	The Protective Power of Developmental Assets	5–1
6	Portrait of the Four Core Measures	6–1
7	Taking Action	7–1
Appendices		
A	Survey Item Percentages by Gender and Grade	A–1
B	Survey Items and Related Developmental Assets, Deficits, Risk-Taking Behaviors, High-Risk Behavior Patterns, and Thriving Indicators	B–1
C	Bibliography of Theory and Research Supporting Search Institute’s Developmental Assets Framework	C–1
D	Search Institute Resources	D–1
E	Frequently Asked Questions	E–1

Figure List

		Page
Figure 1	Average Number of Assets Reported by Your Youth	1–7
Figure 2	The Asset Challenge Facing Your Community	1–8
Figure 3	The Power of Developmental Assets to Promote Thriving Indicators	1–10
Figure 4	The Power of Developmental Assets to Protect Against Risk-Taking Behaviors	1–11
Figure 5	Average Number of Assets Reported by Your Youth	3–2
Figure 6	Percent of Youth Reporting Each of 20 External Assets	3–4
Figure 7	Percent of Youth Reporting Each of 20 Internal Assets	3–8
Figure 8	Average Number of Eight Thriving Indicators Reported by Asset Level	5–2
Figure 9	Average Number of 24 Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level	5–4
Figure 10	Past 30-Day Substance Use by Asset Level	6–2
Figure 11	Age of First Use: Alcohol Use Percentages by Grade	6–4
Figure 12	Age of First Use: Tobacco Use Percentages by Grade	6–5
Figure 13	Age of First Use: Marijuana Use Percentages by Grade	6–6
Figure 14	Perception of Substance-Use Risk by Asset Level	6–7
Figure 15	Perception of Parental Disapproval by Asset Level	6–8
Figure 16	The Asset Challenge Facing Your Community	7–1

Table List

		Page
Table 1	Youth Who Were Surveyed	1–2
Table 2	Percent of Your Youth Reporting External Assets	1–3
Table 3	Percent of Your Youth Reporting Internal Assets	1–4

Table 4	Percent of Youth Reporting External Assets	1–5
Table 5	Percent of Youth Reporting Internal Assets	1–6
Table 6	Youth Who Were Surveyed	2–4
Table 7	Percent of Youth Reporting External Assets (with Definitions)	3–5
Table 8	Percent of Youth Who Report External Assets by Gender and Grade	3–6
Table 9	Percent of Youth Reporting Internal Assets (with Definitions)	3–9
Table 10	Percent of Youth Who Report Internal Assets by Gender and Grade	3–10
Table 11	Percent of Youth Who Report Developmental Deficits	3–11
Table 12	Percentages of Eight Thriving Indicators in Your Youth	4–2
Table 13	Percent of Youth Who Report Nine Risk-Taking Behaviors Related to Substance Use	4–3
Table 14	Percent of Youth Reporting 15 Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors	4–4
Table 15	Percent of Youth Reporting 10 High-Risk Behavior Patterns	4–5
Table 16	Percent of Youth Reporting Eight Thriving Indicators by Asset Level	5–3
Table 17	Percent of Youth Reporting Nine Substance Use-Related Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level	5–5
Table 18	Percent of Youth Reporting 15 Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level	5–6
Table 19	Percent of Youth Reporting 10 High-Risk Behaviors Patterns by Asset Level	5–7
Table 20	Past 30-Day Substance Use by Gender and grade	6–2
Table 21	Age of First Use: Alcohol Use Percentages by Grade	6–4
Table 22	Age of First Use: Tobacco Use Percentages by Grade	6–5
Table 23	Age of First Use: Marijuana Use Percentages by Grade	6–6
Table 24	Perception of Risk of Substance Use by Gender and Grade	6–7
Table 25	Youth Perception of Parental Disapproval	6–8
Table 26	Summary of Four Core Measures Data	6–9

Executive Summary



Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth

Northern Saskatchewan Schools

Over the past 20 years, Search Institute has surveyed nearly three million youth about how they experience the 40 Developmental Assets—a research-based framework that identifies basic building blocks of human development. We've found clear relationships between youth outcomes and asset levels in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.

The results are compelling: The more assets kids have, the better. Youth with high asset levels are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (such as violence, sexual activity, drug use, and suicide), and more likely to engage in thriving behaviors (such as helping others, doing well in school, and taking on leadership roles).

Assets are crucial for the healthy development of all youth, regardless of their community size, geographic region, gender, economic status, race, or ethnicity. This report summarizes the extent to which *your* youth experience the Developmental Assets and how the assets relate to their behavior and overall health.

The Developmental Assets were assessed in your school community in September 2009 through January 2010 using the Search Institute survey *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. Below you'll find a brief summary of demographic data that describes the young people who participated in your study.

Table 1. Youth Who Were Surveyed			
		Number of Youth	Percent of Total
Total Sample¹		1458	100
Gender²	Male	768	53
	Female	671	47
Grade²	6	238	16
	7	254	17
	8	218	15
	9	243	17
	10	226	16
	11	126	9
	12	148	10
Race/Ethnicity²	American Indian	739	51
	Asian	4	0
	Black or African American	3	0
	Hispanic or Latino/Latina	2	0
	Pacific Islander	14	1
	White	264	18
	Other	294	20
	More than one of the above	127	9

¹ Four criteria were used to determine whether individual responses were valid. Survey forms that did not meet one or more of the criteria were discarded. Reasons for survey disqualification include inconsistent responses, missing data on 40 or more items, reports of unrealistically high levels of alcohol or other drug use, and surveys from students in grades other than those intended. See full report for more information.

² Numbers may not add up to the "Total Sample" figure due to missing information on individual surveys.

The Developmental Assets in Your Community

The Developmental Asset framework covers extensive territory, including the experiences of young people and their commitments, values, skills, and identity. Your youth were asked questions about their experience of each of the 40 assets. Their answers form the basis for this report. To grasp the range and depth of concepts measured by the asset framework, we can divide assets into two key areas: external assets and internal assets.

External assets are the positive developmental experiences that families, schools, neighborhoods, community groups, and other youth and family-serving organizations provide young people. These positive experiences are reinforced and supported by the broader efforts of society through government policy, health care providers, law enforcement agencies, civic foundations, and other community institutions.

Table 2. Percent of Your Youth Reporting External Assets			
Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Support	1. Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support.	72
	2. Positive family communication	Young person and his or her parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek parent(s) advice and counsel.	27
	3. Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.	29
	4. Caring neighborhood	Young person experiences caring neighbors.	38
	5. Caring school climate	School provides a caring, encouraging environment.	29
	6. Parent involvement in schooling	Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	30
Empowerment	7. Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	20
	8. Youth as resources	Young people are given useful roles in the community.	25
	9. Service to others	Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	53
	10. Safety	Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	45
Boundaries and Expectations	11. Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.	24
	12. School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.	56
	13. Neighborhood boundaries	Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.	54
	14. Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	20
	15. Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.	52
	16. High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	54
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.	14
	18. Youth programs	Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.	49
	19. Religious community	Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.	47
	20. Time at home	Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	42

Internal assets are the positive commitments, skills, and values that form a young person's inner guidance system. Youth make personal choices and actions based upon the degree to which their internal assets are developed.

Table 3. Percent of Your Youth Reporting Internal Assets			
Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation	Young person is motivated to do well in school.	51
	22. School engagement	Young person is actively engaged in learning.	53
	23. Homework	Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	31
	24. Bonding to school	Young person cares about his or her school.	58
	25. Reading for pleasure	Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	21
Positive Values	26. Caring	Young person places high value on helping other people.	48
	27. Equality and social justice	Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	48
	28. Integrity	Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.	57
	29. Honesty	Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.	66
	30. Responsibility	Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	62
	31. Restraint	Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	29
Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision-making	Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	21
	33. Interpersonal competence	Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.	29
	34. Cultural competence	Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	23
	35. Resistance skills	Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	25
	36. Peaceful conflict resolution	Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	36
Positive Identity	37. Personal power	Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."	25
	38. Self-esteem	Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	42
	39. Sense of purpose	Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."	50
	40. Positive view of personal future	Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.	73

The External Developmental Assets (Assets 1–20)

Think of *external assets* as positive developmental experiences provided for youth by networks of supportive people and social systems in the community. They offer youth a consistent source of love and respect, opportunities for empowerment, leadership, service, and creativity, safe interpersonal and physical boundaries, and high expectations for personal achievement.

The table below summarizes the extent to which young people in your community experience each of the 20 external Developmental Assets.

Table 4. Percent of Youth Reporting External Assets by Gender and Grade											
External Asset	Total Sample	Gender		Grade							
		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Support											
1. Family support	72	72	72	79	77	73	65	68	68	66	
2. Positive family communication	27	25	30	33	28	26	24	24	27	31	
3. Other adult relationships	29	28	31	21	21	26	31	33	41	45	
4. Caring neighborhood	38	38	39	46	43	41	34	34	31	28	
5. Caring school climate	29	30	29	30	27	27	28	24	35	34	
6. Parent involvement in schooling	30	29	32	39	29	34	30	26	23	24	
Empowerment											
7. Community values youth	20	20	20	31	21	22	16	14	16	19	
8. Youth as resources	25	23	28	34	21	26	23	25	25	22	
9. Service to others	53	50	58	60	51	51	54	49	52	54	
10. Safety	45	56	34	31	39	46	45	54	53	59	
Boundaries and Expectations											
11. Family boundaries	24	20	28	25	27	19	27	21	22	26	
12. School boundaries	56	56	56	69	62	53	54	53	41	50	
13. Neighborhood boundaries	54	54	54	67	67	51	53	48	44	36	
14. Adult role models	20	18	23	27	24	22	16	15	18	20	
15. Positive peer influence	52	50	54	73	68	57	46	34	30	36	
16. High expectations	54	54	56	50	58	49	57	56	56	55	
Constructive Use of Time											
17. Creative activities	14	13	16	16	17	11	14	13	12	15	
18. Youth programs	49	50	49	53	47	46	54	48	47	46	
19. Religious community	47	44	52	64	57	55	44	34	30	32	
20. Time at home	42	42	42	56	48	43	30	38	34	45	

The Internal Developmental Assets (Assets 21–40)

The *internal assets* can be thought of as inner characteristics: a young person's motivation and commitment to academic achievement and lifelong learning; his or her positive personal values; social competencies (including relationship and communication skills); and characteristics of personal identity, including an optimistic future outlook and sense of purpose.

The table below summarizes the extent to which young people in your community experience each of the 20 internal Developmental Assets.

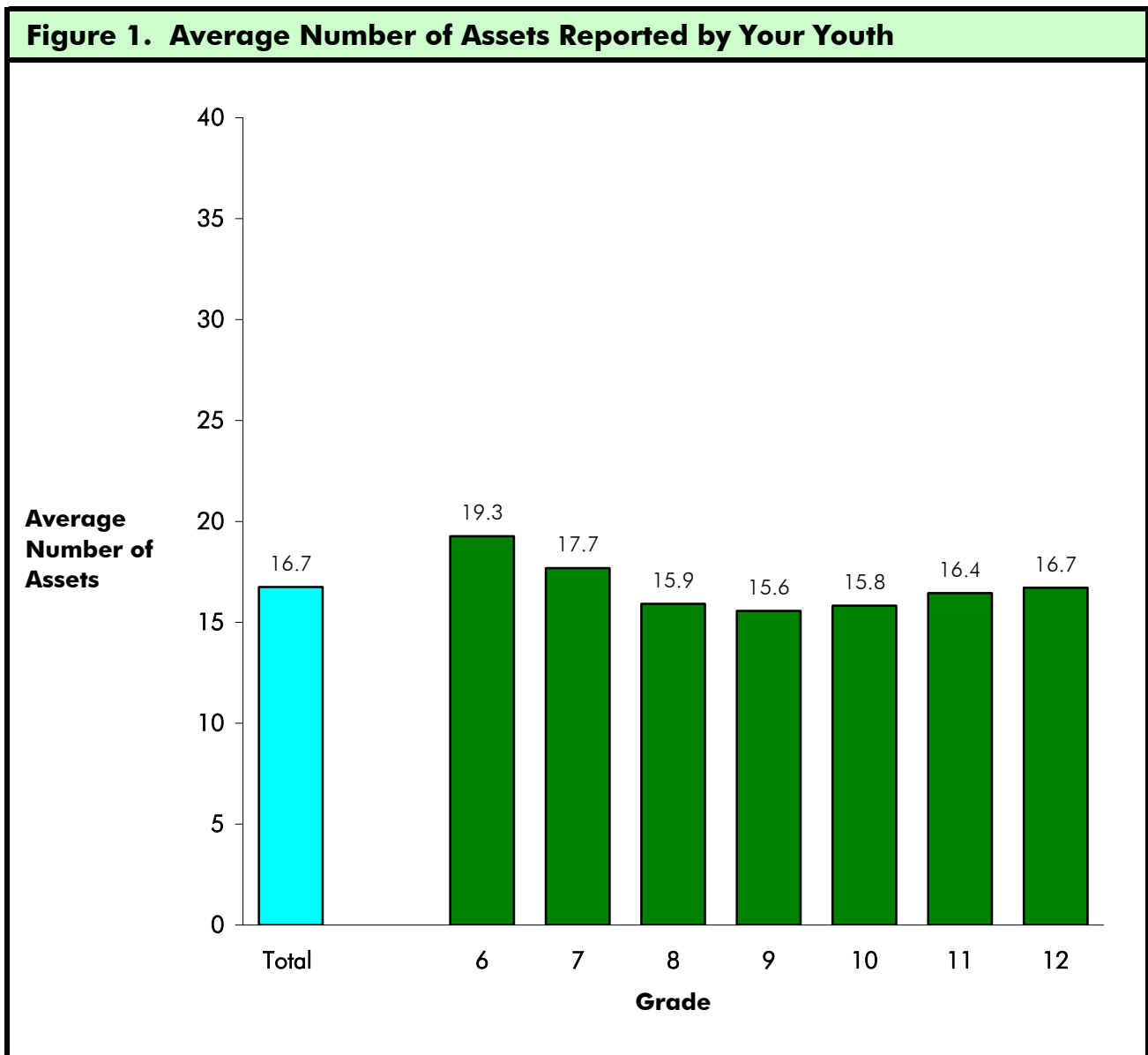
Table 5. Percent of Youth Reporting Internal Assets by Gender and Grade										
Internal Asset	Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Commitment to Learning										
21. Achievement motivation	51	46	58	58	54	40	47	50	52	62
22. School engagement	53	50	58	62	51	50	46	48	58	63
23. Homework	31	27	36	25	22	29	35	34	44	40
24. Bonding to school	58	57	61	69	59	58	52	54	55	59
25. Reading for pleasure	21	14	29	16	24	19	21	17	25	28
Positive Values										
26. Caring	48	43	53	64	42	48	46	41	49	43
27. Equality and social justice	48	42	55	59	43	38	51	43	48	53
28. Integrity	57	48	67	57	52	54	52	55	67	71
29. Honesty	66	60	74	73	62	62	60	68	70	72
30. Responsibility	62	59	65	63	61	54	59	60	71	71
31. Restraint	29	25	33	38	41	35	30	15	18	12
Social Competencies										
32. Planning and decision-making	21	20	22	23	18	16	21	17	22	33
33. Interpersonal competence	29	17	42	31	26	19	29	30	38	32
34. Cultural competence	23	19	26	23	20	19	25	21	26	28
35. Resistance skills	25	23	28	27	31	23	24	18	18	33
36. Peaceful conflict resolution	36	32	41	50	38	35	28	32	33	37
Positive Identity										
37. Personal power	25	24	25	19	23	16	22	28	33	41
38. Self-esteem	42	46	37	40	39	41	35	46	50	51
39. Sense of purpose	50	55	45	43	48	49	49	52	58	62
40. Positive view of personal future	73	73	73	80	74	72	66	74	73	77

Average Number of Developmental Assets in Your Youth

Search Institute's research on adolescents consistently shows a small but meaningful difference in assets between older youth (grades nine through 12) and younger youth (grades six through eight), with younger youth reporting more assets than older youth. This result has been found in both "snapshot" and longitudinal studies. Regardless of age, gender, economic status, or geographic region, most young people in the United States experience far too few of the 40 Developmental Assets.

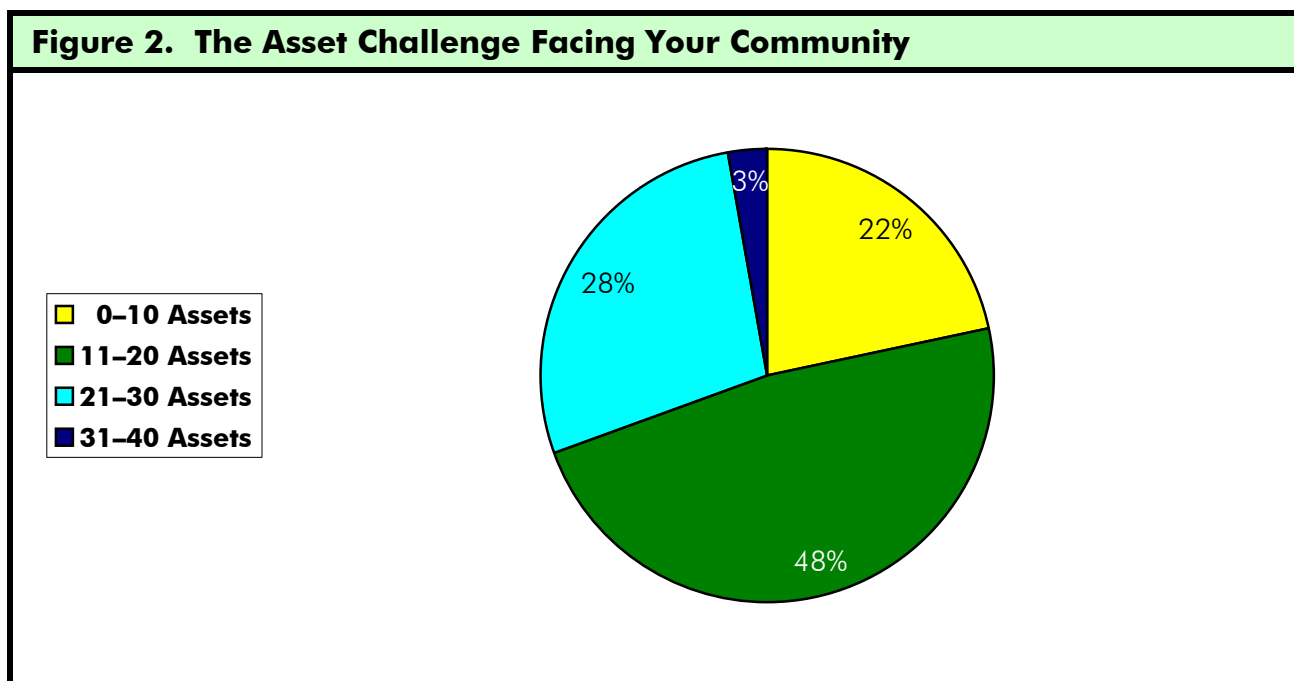
If one or more grade levels in your survey sample report particularly low average numbers of assets compared to other grades in your study, you may need to closely examine community conditions that affect asset development at those particular grade levels.

The following figure reflects the average number of Developmental Assets reported at each grade level by youth in your community.



Your Community's Challenge

For optimal youth outcomes, the more assets youth have, the better. Having 31–40 assets is better than 21–30, which is better than having 11–20, and so on. In an ideal world, communities would strive to ensure that all youth eventually experience between 31 and 40 of the Developmental Assets. In your community, 3 percent of surveyed students report 31 or more of the 40 assets. Below in Figure 2 you'll find the percent of your young people who currently experience Developmental Assets (in asset groups of 10).



The Asset Challenge for All Communities

The state of Developmental Assets in your community is likely to be similar to the challenging asset pattern found throughout the country. The particular strengths and weaknesses highlighted in this report are a unique reflection of your community, but general patterns (of average numbers of assets, general decreases in asset levels, and relationships between assets and risk behaviors and between assets and thriving behaviors) are typical of other communities that have administered this survey to youth. Search Institute studies have found regardless of town size or geography that youth typically lack support. Communities can draw upon the inherent strengths of youth and adults to increase assets in young people and do the following:

- Give adequate adult support through long-term, positive intergenerational relationships;
- Provide meaningful leadership and community involvement opportunities;
- Engage young people in youth-serving programs;
- Provide consistent and well-defined behavioral boundaries;
- Help youth connect to their community; and
- Create critical opportunities to develop social competencies and form positive values.

Young people may face complex social forces, including:

- High levels of parental absence;
- Adult silence on positive values and healthy boundaries;
- Fragmented family and community social systems;
- Neighbors who are isolated from one another and separated by age barriers;
- Adult fear of becoming involved and the sense that young people are someone else's responsibility;
- Public disengagement from the important work of building meaningful connections with youth;
- Youth overexposure to media saturated with violence and sexual situations;
- Poverty and lack of access to supportive programs and services;
- Inadequate education and poor economic opportunities that cause families to be unable to provide for their children's needs;
- Schools, religious institutions, and other youth-serving organizations that are not adequately equipped to be supportive, caring, and challenging in a positive way.

By working to eliminate these barriers and conditions, communities can fortify young people against the allure of risk-taking behaviors, negative pressures, and undesirable sources of belonging in order to prepare them to become the next generation of parents, workers, leaders, and citizens. While this combination of social factors suggests that we have much work to do, a concerted effort by all members of the community to build assets in youth can strengthen our capacity to be caring, connected and committed to the common good.

The Power of Developmental Assets to Promote Thriving in Youth

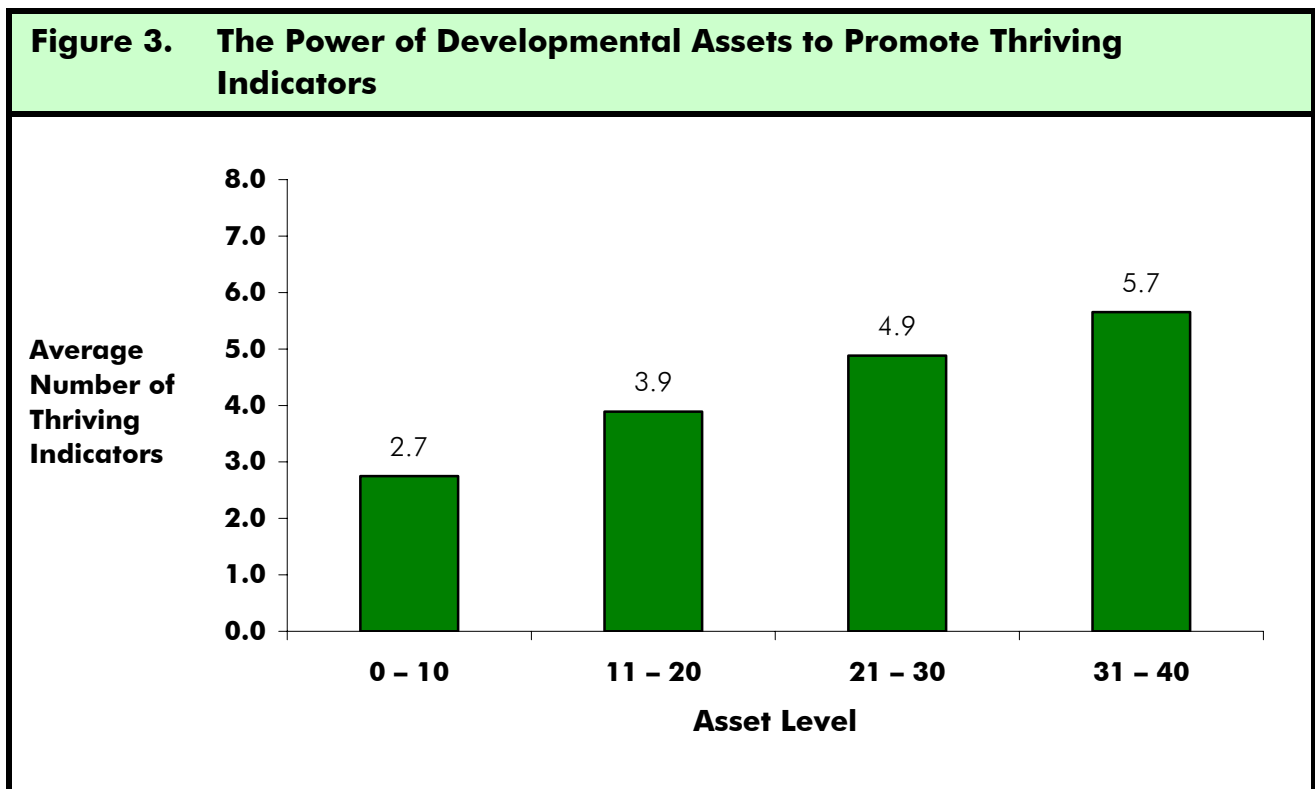
Youth who report higher levels of assets are not only less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors, but they are also more likely to consistently report higher numbers of eight thriving indicators, according to Search Institute's research. These indicators offer a brief look at thriving, which is a much more comprehensive concept.³ Figure 3 reflects the power of assets to promote the eight specific thriving indicators among young people.

Eight Indicators of Thriving Youth

Youth:

- Experience school success
- Help others informally
- Value diversity
- Maintain good personal health
- Exhibit leadership
- Resist danger
- Control impulsive behavior
- Overcome adversity

In the figure below, each bar represents a relationship between the average number of thriving indicators reported by your youth and the total number of assets (in asset groups of 10) reported by the same youth.



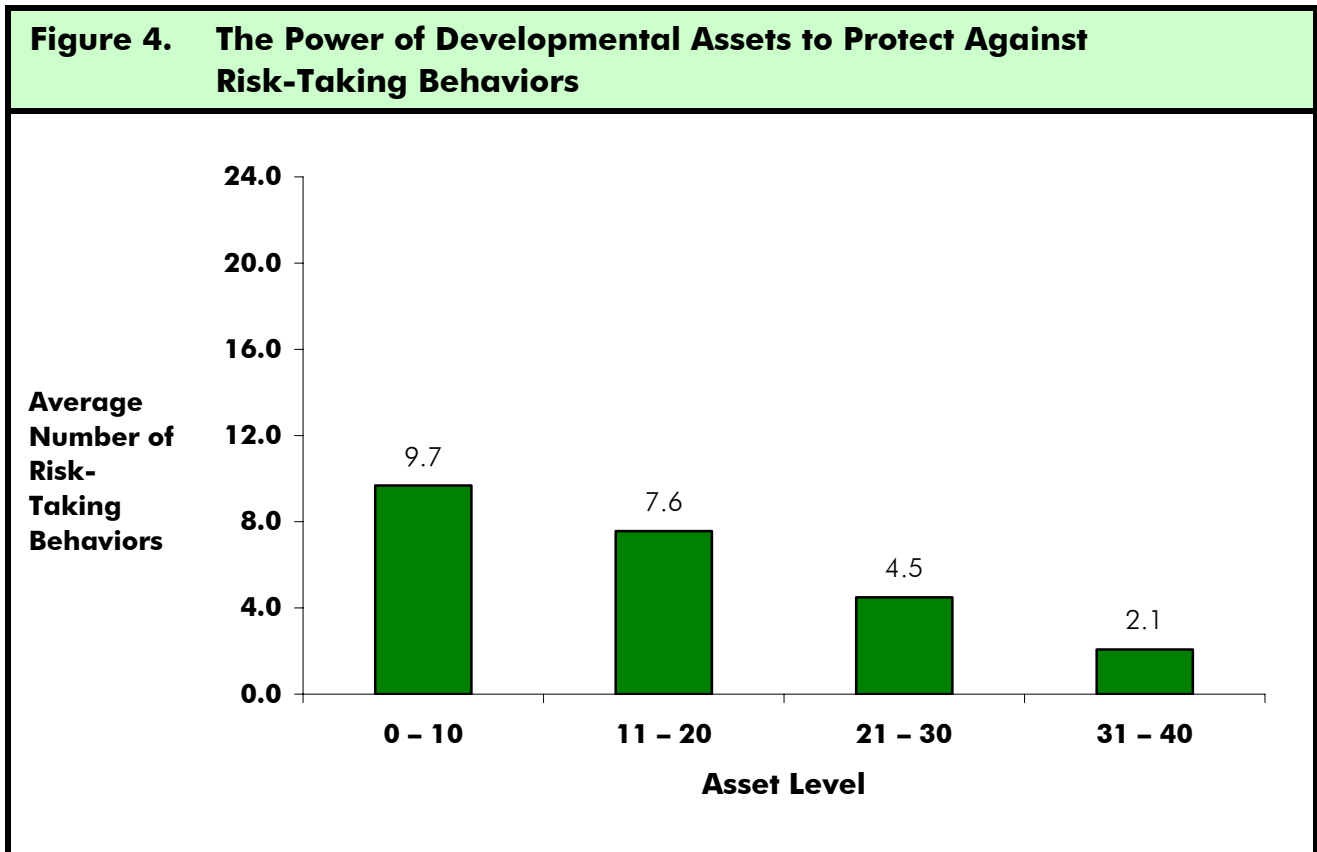
³ For more details regarding the definition and measurement of thriving, see *Sparks: How Parents Can Ignite the Hidden Strengths of Teenagers* by Peter L. Benson, Ph.D. (Jossey-Bass, 2008). See also Benson, P. L., & Scales, P. C. (2009). The definition and preliminary measurement of thriving in adolescence. *Journal of Positive Psychology* 4(1), 85-104.

The Protective Power of Developmental Assets

Search Institute's research consistently shows that youth with higher levels of Developmental Assets are involved in fewer risk-taking behaviors and experience higher levels of thriving indicators. Developmental Assets have the power to protect youth from engaging in the following 24 risk-taking behaviors:

- Risk-Taking Behaviors**
- Alcohol use
 - Binge drinking
 - Marijuana use
 - Smokeless tobacco use
 - Illegal drug use
 - Driving while drinking
 - Early sexual intercourse
 - Vandalism
 - Inhalant use
 - Smoking
 - Shoplifting
 - Using a weapon
 - Eating disorders
 - Skipping school
 - Gambling
 - Depression
 - Getting into trouble with police
 - Hitting another person
 - Hurting another person
 - Fighting in groups
 - Carrying a weapon for protection
 - Threatening to cause physical harm
 - Attempting suicide
 - Riding with an impaired driver

Each vertical bar in Figure 4 represents the average number of risk-taking behaviors reported by your youth at particular asset levels (in asset groups of 10). *Note the average number of risk-taking behaviors reported by students who experience assets at both the highest and lowest levels.*



Take Action!

This report provides educators and administrators, parents, neighbors, community members, and leaders with insight into the behaviors, opportunities, and challenges facing young people in your community. Use this information as a powerful basis for ongoing, community-wide discussions about how best to improve the well-being of your youth.

Set a Community-Wide Asset Goal

It is important for each community to establish and work toward the goal of a higher average total number of assets that each of its young people experience. This goal-setting process can provide a critical opportunity for community members to create a shared vision for healthy youth. As you begin your goal-setting process, keep in mind the barriers and challenges noted above, as well as the protective power of Developmental Assets and their power to help youth thrive.

The good news is that everyone—parents, grandparents, educators, neighbors, children, teenagers, youth workers, employers, health care providers, business people, religious leaders, coaches, mentors, and many others—can build Developmental Assets in youth. Ideally, an entire community will become involved in ensuring that its young people receive the solid developmental foundation they need to become tomorrow’s competent, caring adults.

Begin With First Steps

As a Neighbor or Caring Adult, You Can . . .

- Invite a young person you know to join you in an activity: play a game, visit a park, or go for a walk together.
- Greet the children and adolescents you see every day.
- Send birthday cards, letters, “I’m thinking of you” notes, or e-messages to a child or adolescent with whom you have a connection.

As a Young Person, You Can . . .

- Challenge yourself to develop a new interest on your own, or try a new activity through school, local youth programming, cocurricular activities, or faith community youth program.
- Strike up a conversation with an adult you admire, and get to know that person better. See adults as potential friends and informal mentors.
- Look for opportunities to build relationships with younger children through service projects, tutoring, or baby-sitting.

As a Parent or Family Member, You Can . . .

- Consistently model—and talk about—your family’s values and priorities.
- Regularly include all children in your family in projects around the house, recreational activities of all kinds, and community service projects that benefit people with needs greater than your own.
- Post a list of the Developmental Assets and talk to children about them. Ask teens for suggestions of ways to strengthen their assets as well as yours.

As an Organization Member and/or Businessperson, You Can . . .

- Highlight, develop, expand, and support programs designed to build assets, such as one-on-one mentoring, peer helping, service learning, and parent education.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute to the lives of others, in and through your organization.
- Develop employee policies that encourage asset building in youth, including flexible work schedules for parents and other employees that allow them to volunteer in youth development programs.

For detailed information about building Developmental Assets or starting an asset-building initiative in your community, visit Search Institute at www.search-institute.org or call (800) 888-7828.

Complete Report



Section 2

Developmental Assets: A Model of Positive Human Development

This report summarizes how young people in your community experience the 40 Developmental Assets and how those assets relate to their behavioral choices, as measured by the Search Institute survey *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. Students in your community recently took the survey in September 2009 through January 2010.

Search Institute's framework of 40 Developmental Assets provides a positive way to assess the overall well-being of middle school and high school youth. Assets represent developmental building blocks that are crucial for all youth, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, family economics, community size, or geographic region. Search Institute's research is based on fifty years of scientific inquiry into risk-taking and resiliency factors, as well as normal developmental processes. See Section 3, Portrait of Developmental Assets, for a complete list of Developmental Assets.

Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors assesses the protective factors present in the lives of youth, including thriving and resiliency behaviors. It also measures levels of high-risk behaviors, including the use of tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, violence, and early sexual involvement. By juxtaposing challenging risk behaviors with the positive model of the Developmental Asset framework, Search Institute offers communities a hopeful vision of change that can guide your efforts to create a positive climate in which to raise youth. The framework emphasizes healthy human development, and relies on every resident to share responsibility for ensuring that young people grow up healthy and capable of leading productive lives.

The Value of Developmental Assets

Search Institute researchers synthesized what's been learned from a substantial body of literature in the fields of developmental psychology and positive youth development, as well as drawing upon decades of Search Institute research studies, to create the Developmental Assets framework.⁴ The Institute's survey research demonstrates a **strong correlation between high levels of Developmental Assets present in young people's lives and significantly lower levels of risk-taking behaviors, including substance use, school truancy, premature sexual activity, and delinquency.**

The research also shows that youth who report higher levels of Developmental Assets are more likely to show **signs of thriving**, including **higher student achievement and school success**, as well as **informal helping behaviors, leadership, resisting danger and controlling impulsive behavior, valuing diversity, maintaining good personal health, and overcoming adversity.**

Ensuring Healthy Youth—Everyone's Responsibility

Study after study—local and national—draws attention to disturbingly high rates of teen and adolescent risk-taking. These behaviors include alcohol and other drug use, early sexual activity and teen pregnancy, interpersonal violence, and school failure, among others. In searching for solutions, communities and

⁴ Scales, Peter C., Ph.D. and Leffert, Nancy, Ph.D. (2004). *Developmental Assets: A Synthesis of the Scientific Research on Adolescent Development* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

individuals may turn to prevention programs, behavioral interventions, and social services for help. These methods are often, although not always, effective.

It's vitally important for communities to confront behaviors that threaten the health, safety, and positive futures of young people, whether youth engage in risky behaviors themselves or are exploited by the behaviors of other adults, the media, pervasive poverty, racism, or family and community violence. Despite the best efforts of concerned, competent people and community organizations, these problems often persist or are replaced by equally challenging ones.

Troubling youth behaviors can often be explained by a scarcity of positive developmental experiences. Strengthening, and in some cases rebuilding, the Developmental Assets framework is essential for young people's positive development.

The Developmental Assets framework allows you a way to assess the health of youth in your community and focus community-wide attention on creating the positive conditions necessary to nurture healthy development. Responsibility for ensuring these conditions lies with adults who interact with youth every day—families, friends, neighbors, teachers, retirees, law enforcement professionals, business people, coworkers, religious leaders—and many others. Everyone has a valuable role to play in nurturing healthy youth.

Key Supports for Young People

The Developmental Assets approach emphasizes the importance of providing youth with the positive core developmental supports and traits they need from adults, including but not limited to:

- Caring adult relationships
- Positive intergenerational family relationships
- Safety at home, school, and in the neighborhood
- Clear, consistent boundaries and guidelines
- Opportunities for participation in constructive activities
- A commitment to learning
- Consistent attention to developing positive values
- Opportunities to serve the needs of others
- Time to practice and learn planning and decision-making skills
- Opportunities to develop a sense of purpose and goals for the future

External and Internal Developmental Assets

Think of the 40 Developmental Assets as **external** experiences in the home, school, peer group, and community that support and nurture youth, and **internal** attitudes, values, and competencies that work together to help youth become healthy, independent, and successful young adults.

External assets are positive developmental experiences that surround youth with support, personal boundaries and expectations, and opportunities for empowerment and constructive use of time. When various systems in the community deliberately provide these critical experiences for young people, positive development is stimulated and nurtured.

Internal assets are elements of a young person's educational commitments, strong positive values, social competencies, and healthy, positive identity. Similar to external assets, internal assets develop in young people through consistent, deliberate community efforts.

For more information about Search Institute's work and research supporting the Developmental Assets framework, see Appendix C.

How Your Survey Was Conducted

Search Institute's *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey measures Developmental Assets levels in your community. Similar research has been conducted with nearly three million young people in hundreds of communities across the country and around the world.⁵

The survey was administered in September 2009 through January 2010 to students in grades 6 through 12 at Ben McIntyre School in Uranium City, Charlebois Community School, Churchill Community High School, and Pre-Cam Community School in La Ronge, Creighton Community School in Creighton, Gordon Denny Community School in Air Ronge, Hector Thiboutot Community School in Sandy Bay, Jans Bay School in Jans Bay, Kiskahikan School in Weyakwin, Lakeview School in Cole Bay, La Loche Community School in La Loche, Minahik Waskahigan School in Pinehouse, Rossignol High School in Ile a la Crosse, Stony Rapids School in Stony Rapids, St. Pascal School in Green Lake, Timber Bay School in Timber Bay, Twin Lakes Community School in Buffalo Narrows, and Valley View Community School in Beauval, SK. Standardized administration procedures were provided to school staff by Search Institute to enhance the quality of the data. To ensure complete student anonymity, no names or identification numbers were used. Parents were notified of the survey administration and given the option of withdrawing their student(s); 17 did so.

A Note about Interpreting the Data

To create the final dataset on which these findings are based, multiple careful reviews were made of individual survey responses. For your survey report, 68 surveys were eliminated due to one or more of the following factors:

- Inconsistent responses within a single survey;
- Missing data on 40 or more items within the same survey;
- Unrealistically high levels of alcohol or other drug use within the same survey (such as reporting daily use of multiple drugs);
- Reporting a grade level other than those intended to be surveyed.

The number of surveys discarded from your survey sample represents 5 percent of the total number of your surveys received by Search Institute. Typically, between five and eight percent of surveys are discarded for the reasons mentioned above. If, for any reason, the percentage of discarded surveys is greater than 10 percent, caution should be used in interpreting the results, as survey bias may be present.

An important factor affecting survey data quality is the degree to which the surveyed students represent all youth in a participating school(s). If a survey consists of a *random sample* of students, the sample must be large enough to appropriately represent the student population. Survey studies that are intended to assess *all* youth should ideally obtain data from at least 80 percent of the student population. Neither method produces perfect results, but both methods can provide quality information about your youth.

In this report, percentages are generally reported by total group, gender, and grade. To protect students' anonymity, if data is received from fewer than 30 students per grade, percentages are reported for *combinations* of grades (for example, grades six, seven, and eight, grades nine and 10, or grades 11 and 12).

⁵ The current framework of 40 Developmental Assets reflects Search Institute's continuing commitment to increase an understanding of Developmental Assets and the developmental processes working in the lives of children and adolescents. Search Institute studies conducted prior to 1996 measured a set of 30 Developmental Assets.

Please note: When grade-level survey sample sizes are 50 or less, exercise caution in making blanket comparisons between individual grade levels, unless sample sizes represent the total number of youth in those grades. Also, when not every student in grades six through 12 is surveyed, use caution in reporting total survey item percentages, as figures will not necessarily represent the experience of the entire population of students in grades six through 12. See Table 6 below for characteristics of the youth who participated in your study.

Table 6. Youth Who Were Surveyed			
		Number of Youth	Percent of Total
Total Sample⁶		1458	100
Gender⁷	Male	768	53
	Female	671	47
Grade⁷	6	238	16
	7	254	17
	8	218	15
	9	243	17
	10	226	16
	11	126	9
	12	148	10
Race/Ethnicity⁷	American Indian	739	51
	Asian	4	0
	Black or African American	3	0
	Hispanic or Latino/Latina	2	0
	Pacific Islander	14	1
	White	264	18
	Other	294	20
	More than one of the above	127	9

⁶ Four criteria were used to determine whether individual responses were valid. Survey forms that did not meet one or more of the criteria were discarded. Reasons for survey disqualification include inconsistent responses, missing data on 40 or more items, reports of unrealistically high levels of alcohol or other drug use, and surveys from students in grades other than those intended. See full report for more information.

⁷ Numbers may not add up to the "Total Sample" figure due to missing information on individual surveys.

How to Use This Report

This report contains important insights into the lives of young people living in your community. It includes information about the challenges they face, as well as the external supports and internal strengths they have to help them overcome those challenges. When reading survey reports, readers sometimes debate the meaning or accuracy of individual numbers. General guidelines for interpreting your results may be helpful:

- First, give additional consideration to survey differences of *five percentage points or more* between grade levels and between males and females.
- Next, look for *patterns* of findings, rather than focusing on a specific asset level or individual survey item finding. Ask, for example, “Does one grade level or set of grade levels consistently report fewer assets?”
- Finally, rather than overwhelming and confusing community members with individual item numbers, *convey an overall message* about youth in your community, such as the average number of assets reported by your youth.

Many members of your community will benefit from the information in this report, including:

- Young people
- Educators
- Youth workers
- Community leaders
- Healthcare providers
- Parents
- Media representatives
- Religious leaders
- Employers and business people
- After-school caregivers and coaches
- Community and neighborhood residents

Use local resources, as well as survey resources from Search Institute’s Web site (www.search-institute.org), Survey Services, and Training and Speaking departments, to communicate your survey findings. See Appendix D for an extensive list of asset-building resources to aid your efforts and Appendix E for answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

After you share the survey report with your youth, parents, educators, community leaders and others, you can begin the important work of asset building. This work requires long-term commitment and community-wide effort. While the information gathered from the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey represents a snapshot of your youth at a particular moment in time, opportunities for asset building in youth (ideally beginning at birth and continuing throughout childhood) can extend well into adolescence and beyond.

See section 7, *Taking Action*, for ideas on getting started. And note the “Questions to Consider” at the bottom of many pages, which can be used to start a candid discussion about what works well and what needs attention in your community’s efforts to build assets in your young people. Once you’re engaged in asset building, you may discover individuals and groups who are already involved in supporting youth in highly creative ways. While asset building is not a program, it is a catalyst for empowering and connecting all parts of the community.

Section 3

Portrait of Developmental Assets

Here you'll find information in various forms about the state of Developmental Assets in your young people, including reports of "Average Number of Assets" and "Percentage of Youth Who Report Each Asset." Whether a youth is said to have an asset is based on how that person answered survey questions that measure the asset.

Each asset is carefully evaluated, and is considered either present or absent in a youth's life in order to simplify survey reporting and focus attention on overall trends. In reality, of course, young people experience assets by degrees, and not as an "all or nothing" proposition.

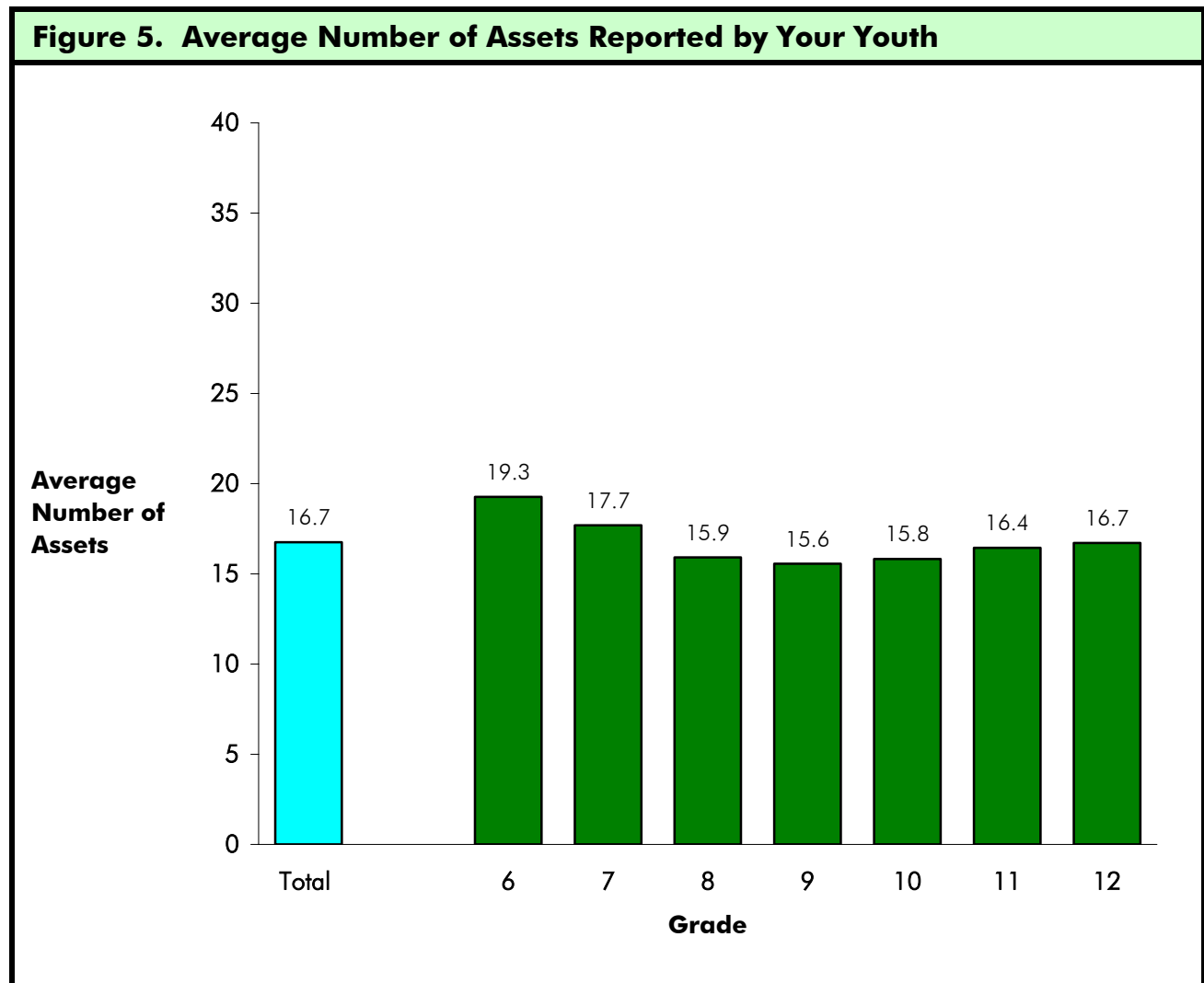
To motivate and challenge your community, you'll want to create a shared vision of the average number of assets your youth should ideally experience. This approach reminds everyone that many different asset combinations contribute to the healthy development of young people. When the majority of youth experience an asset, that experience becomes the accepted standard for the community.

See Appendix A for detailed information about youth responses to each survey item, and Appendix B to examine the relationship between survey items and the assets they measure.

Average Number of Assets in Your Youth

Students' individual survey responses were analyzed to determine whether they "have" each asset. Figure 5 represents the average number of Developmental Assets reported by your students, as well as the average number reported at each grade level.

Most young people in the United States—regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, economic status, or geographic region—experience too few of the 40 assets. Of particular concern, a Search Institute longitudinal study found that the average number of assets reported by adolescents in the 6th through 8th grades tends to decrease as they move into the 9th through 12th grades.



Questions to Consider

- What is the average number of assets reported by your youth?
- How does the average number of reported assets compare across various grade levels?
- Do some grade levels report especially low numbers of assets? If so, why might this be, and what response can you make to turn the numbers around?

External Developmental Assets

External assets are the positive experiences and supports a young person receives from formal and informal connections to adults and peers in the community. Twenty external assets are organized into four categories: **Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations**, and **Constructive Use of Time**.

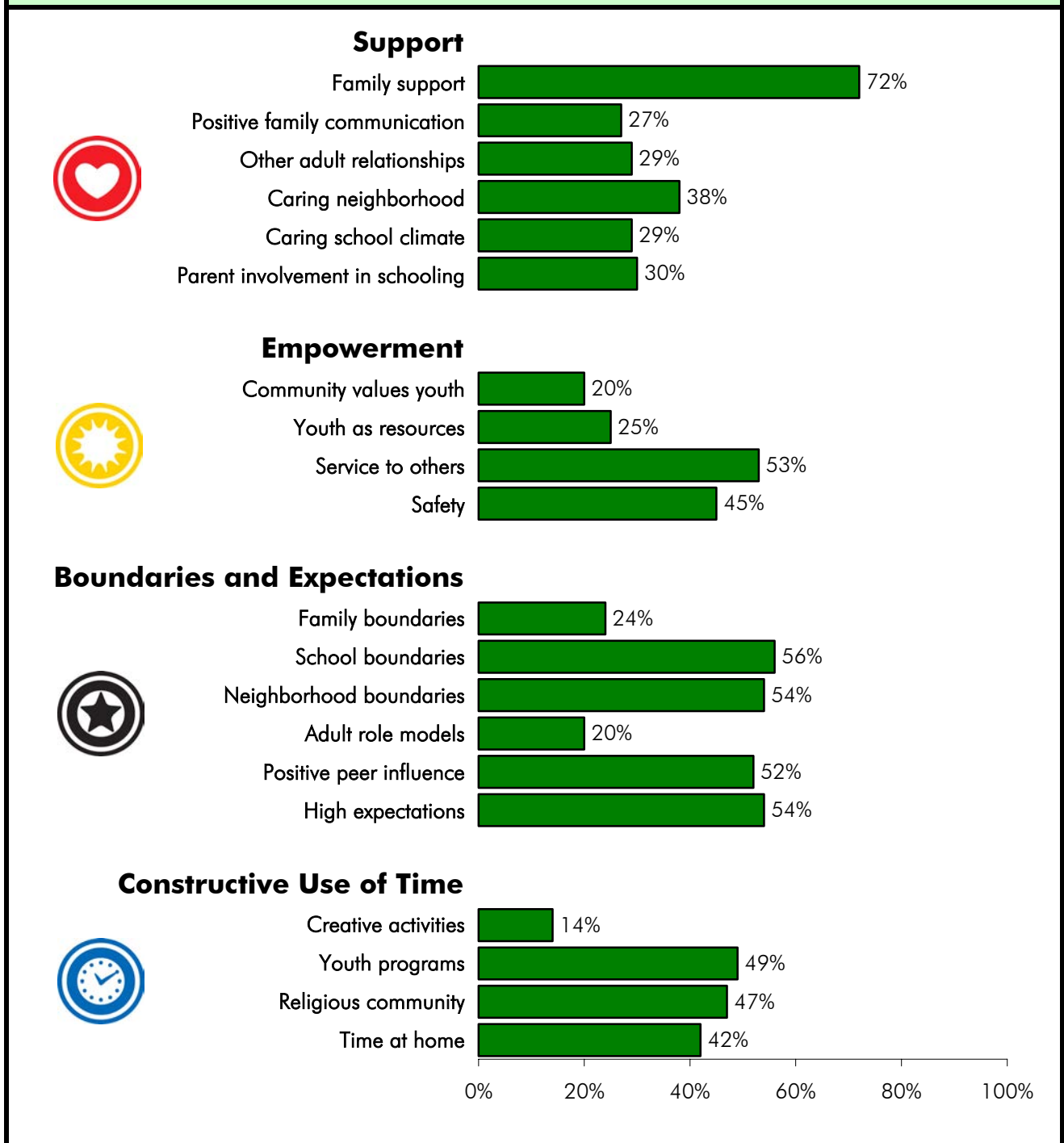
The **Support** assets refer to the love, affirmation, and acceptance that young people receive from their families, other adults, and peers. Ideally, young people experience an abundance of support not only within their families, but also from many other people in their community.

The **Empowerment** assets relate to the key developmental need youth have to be valued and valuable. Empowerment assets focus on community perceptions of young people (as reported by youth themselves), on opportunities for youth to contribute to and serve their community in meaningful ways, and on the community's efforts to create a safe place for youth to grow and flourish.

Boundaries and Expectations assets refer to the need youth have for clear and enforced boundaries to complement their experience of the Support and Empowerment assets. Ideally, Boundaries and Expectations assets are experienced within the family, school, and neighborhood, providing a set of consistent messages about appropriate and acceptable behavior across social systems and contexts.

The **Constructive Use of Time** assets are the purposeful, structured opportunities for children and adolescents that a healthy community offers to its young people. Whether they're provided through schools, community groups, or religious institutions, organized activities contribute to the development of many external and internal assets.

Figure 6. Percent of Youth Reporting Each of 20 External Assets



External Developmental Assets in Your Youth

This table reflects percentages of external Developmental Assets reported by the total sample of youth who were surveyed. The data refer to each of the 20 external assets, which are grouped by external asset categories (Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time).

Table 7. Percent of Youth Reporting External Assets (with Definitions)			
Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Support	1. Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support.	72
	2. Positive family communication	Young person and his or her parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek parent(s) advice and counsel.	27
	3. Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.	29
	4. Caring neighborhood	Young person experiences caring neighbors.	38
	5. Caring school climate	School provides a caring, encouraging environment.	29
	6. Parent involvement in schooling	Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	30
Empowerment	7. Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	20
	8. Youth as resources	Young people are given useful roles in the community.	25
	9. Service to others	Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	53
	10. Safety	Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	45
Boundaries and Expectations	11. Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.	24
	12. School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.	56
	13. Neighborhood boundaries	Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.	54
	14. Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	20
	15. Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.	52
	16. High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	54
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.	14
	18. Youth programs	Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.	49
	19. Religious community	Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.	47
	20. Time at home	Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	42

Questions to Consider

- Which external Developmental Assets are particularly strong in your surveyed students? Particularly weak?
- Which external asset **categories** are particularly strong or weak?
- What implications do these findings have for your community?

External Assets by Gender and Grade

This table reflects percentages of surveyed youth who reported each of the 20 external Developmental Assets. Results are given by *total sample*, *gender*, and *grade* and are grouped by external asset categories. Notice that percentages for the total sample correspond to the bar graph in Figure 6.

Table 8. Percent of Youth Reporting External Assets by Gender and Grade											
External Asset	Total Sample	Gender		Grade							
		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Support											
1. Family support	72	72	72	79	77	73	65	68	68	66	
2. Positive family communication	27	25	30	33	28	26	24	24	27	31	
3. Other adult relationships	29	28	31	21	21	26	31	33	41	45	
4. Caring neighborhood	38	38	39	46	43	41	34	34	31	28	
5. Caring school climate	29	30	29	30	27	27	28	24	35	34	
6. Parent involvement in schooling	30	29	32	39	29	34	30	26	23	24	
Empowerment											
7. Community values youth	20	20	20	31	21	22	16	14	16	19	
8. Youth as resources	25	23	28	34	21	26	23	25	25	22	
9. Service to others	53	50	58	60	51	51	54	49	52	54	
10. Safety	45	56	34	31	39	46	45	54	53	59	
Boundaries and Expectations											
11. Family boundaries	24	20	28	25	27	19	27	21	22	26	
12. School boundaries	56	56	56	69	62	53	54	53	41	50	
13. Neighborhood boundaries	54	54	54	67	67	51	53	48	44	36	
14. Adult role models	20	18	23	27	24	22	16	15	18	20	
15. Positive peer influence	52	50	54	73	68	57	46	34	30	36	
16. High expectations	54	54	56	50	58	49	57	56	56	55	
Constructive Use of Time											
17. Creative activities	14	13	16	16	17	11	14	13	12	15	
18. Youth programs	49	50	49	53	47	46	54	48	47	46	
19. Religious community	47	44	52	64	57	55	44	34	30	32	
20. Time at home	42	42	42	56	48	43	30	38	34	45	

Questions to Consider

- Do significant differences show up between numbers of external assets reported by males and females? If so, which external assets are those?
- Did some grade levels report consistently higher or lower levels of external assets compared to others? If so, what might explain the differences?
- How can the community respond in a constructive way to disparities in asset levels?

Internal Developmental Assets

Internal assets are those qualities, skills, and attributes a community and family can nurture within youth so they can contribute to their own development. The 20 internal assets are divided into four asset categories: **Commitment to Learning**, **Positive Values**, **Social Competencies**, and **Positive Identity**.

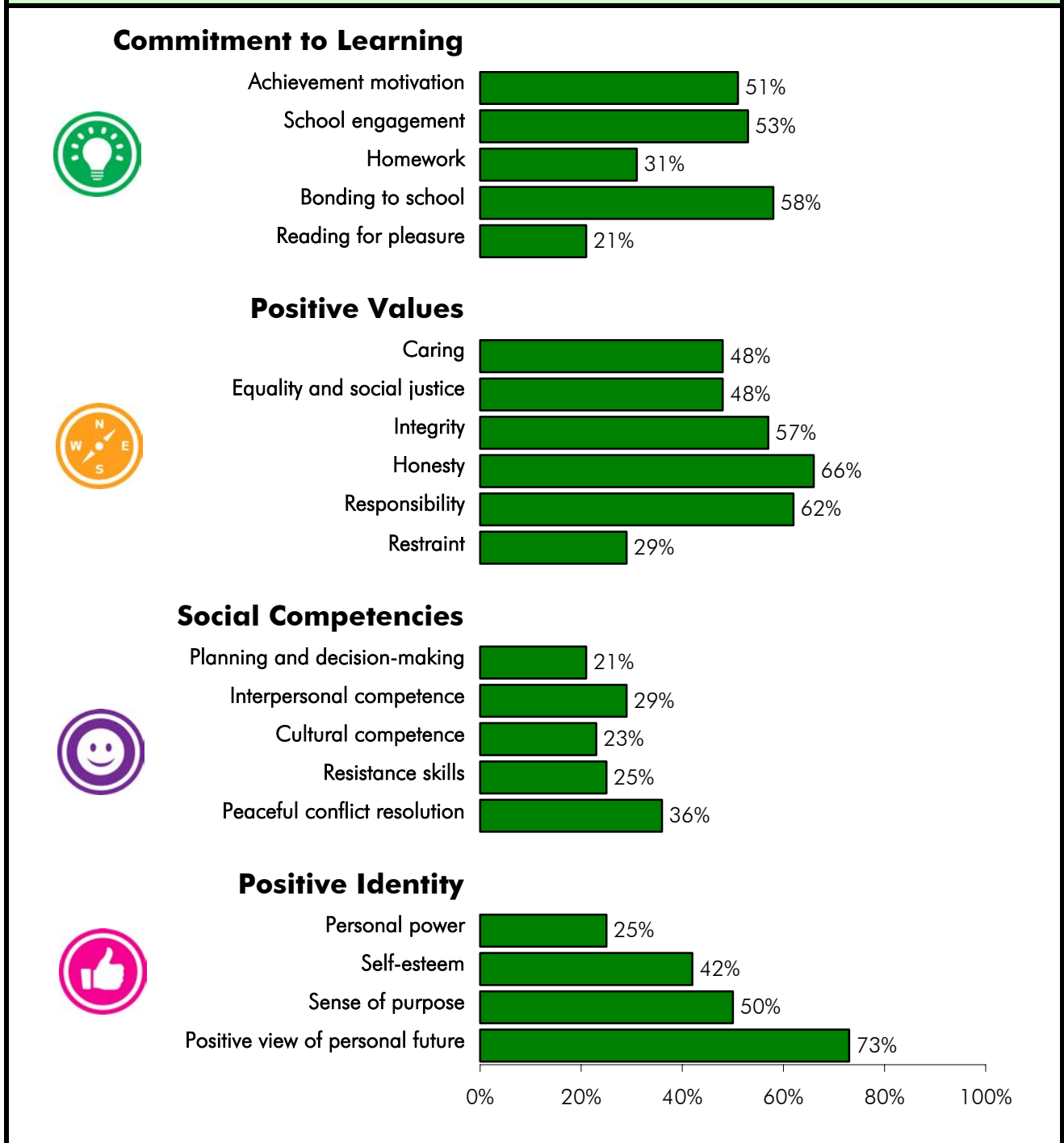
Commitment to Learning assets are essential in a rapidly changing world. Developing intellectual curiosity and critical thinking skills to acquire knowledge and learn from experience are important characteristics of successful adolescents.

Positive Values assets are important “internal compasses” that guide young people's priorities and choices. These values represent the foundation first laid by a young person’s family. Though parents and caregivers seek to nurture and instill many values in children, the asset framework focuses particularly on six known to help prevent high-risk behaviors and promote caring for others.

Social Competencies assets reflect important personal skills young people need to negotiate the maze of choices and options they face in the teenage years. These skills also lay a foundation for the development of independence and competence as young adults.

Positive Identity assets focus on young people's views of themselves—their own sense of power, purpose, worth, and promise. Without these assets, young people risk feeling powerless and lack a sense of initiative and meaning.

Figure 7. Percent of Youth Reporting Each of 20 Internal Assets



Internal Developmental Assets in Your Youth

This table reflects percentages of internal Developmental Assets reported by the total sample of youth who were surveyed. The data refer to each of the 20 internal assets, which are grouped by internal asset categories (Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity).

Table 9. Percent of Youth Reporting Internal Assets (with Definitions)			
Category	Asset Name	Definition	Percent
Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation	Young person is motivated to do well in school.	51
	22. School engagement	Young person is actively engaged in learning.	53
	23. Homework	Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	31
	24. Bonding to school	Young person cares about his or her school.	58
	25. Reading for pleasure	Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	21
Positive Values	26. Caring	Young person places high value on helping other people.	48
	27. Equality and social justice	Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	48
	28. Integrity	Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.	57
	29. Honesty	Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.	66
	30. Responsibility	Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	62
	31. Restraint	Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	29
Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision-making	Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	21
	33. Interpersonal competence	Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.	29
	34. Cultural competence	Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	23
	35. Resistance skills	Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	25
	36. Peaceful conflict resolution	Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	36
Positive Identity	37. Personal power	Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."	25
	38. Self-esteem	Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	42
	39. Sense of purpose	Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."	50
	40. Positive view of personal future	Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.	73

Questions to Consider

- Where are the strengths and needs of your youth with respect to their internal assets? Which assets do more youth report, and which do fewer report?
- Are reports of some internal asset categories particularly high or low? Why might this be?
- What actions can you take to strengthen internal assets in your young people?

Internal Assets by Gender and Grade

This table reflects percentages of surveyed youth who reported each of the 20 internal Developmental Assets. Results are given by *total sample*, *gender*, and *grade* and are grouped by internal asset categories. Notice that percentages for the total sample correspond to the bar graph in Figure 7.

Table 10. Percent of Youth Reporting Internal Assets by Gender and Grade											
Internal Asset	Total Sample	Gender		Grade							
		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Commitment to Learning											
21. Achievement motivation	51	46	58	58	54	40	47	50	52	62	
22. School engagement	53	50	58	62	51	50	46	48	58	63	
23. Homework	31	27	36	25	22	29	35	34	44	40	
24. Bonding to school	58	57	61	69	59	58	52	54	55	59	
25. Reading for pleasure	21	14	29	16	24	19	21	17	25	28	
Positive Values											
26. Caring	48	43	53	64	42	48	46	41	49	43	
27. Equality and social justice	48	42	55	59	43	38	51	43	48	53	
28. Integrity	57	48	67	57	52	54	52	55	67	71	
29. Honesty	66	60	74	73	62	62	60	68	70	72	
30. Responsibility	62	59	65	63	61	54	59	60	71	71	
31. Restraint	29	25	33	38	41	35	30	15	18	12	
Social Competencies											
32. Planning and decision-making	21	20	22	23	18	16	21	17	22	33	
33. Interpersonal competence	29	17	42	31	26	19	29	30	38	32	
34. Cultural competence	23	19	26	23	20	19	25	21	26	28	
35. Resistance skills	25	23	28	27	31	23	24	18	18	33	
36. Peaceful conflict resolution	36	32	41	50	38	35	28	32	33	37	
Positive Identity											
37. Personal power	25	24	25	19	23	16	22	28	33	41	
38. Self-esteem	42	46	37	40	39	41	35	46	50	51	
39. Sense of purpose	50	55	45	43	48	49	49	52	58	62	
40. Positive view of personal future	73	73	73	80	74	72	66	74	73	77	

Questions to Consider

- Are there significant differences between internal asset levels reported by males and females? If so, which assets are those?
- Do some grade levels report consistently higher or lower levels of external assets than others? If so, what might explain the differences?

Developmental Deficits in Youth

Assets form part of the developmental foundation upon which healthy lives are built. Although Search Institute advocates positive, community-based efforts to promote Developmental Assets in young people, communities must also focus attention on preventing the developmental deficits measured by *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. Developmental deficits are the negative influences that can interfere with the ability to develop into a healthy, successful adult. These influences limit a young person's access to external assets, block their development of internal assets, and ease the way into risky behavioral choices. While deficits don't necessarily do permanent harm by themselves, together they make lasting harm possible.

Five developmental deficit conditions were evaluated in this survey, including being home alone two or more hours per school day; exposure to television and video programming three or more hours per day; victimization by household physical abuse; victimization by violence outside the home; and exposure to tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and other substance use at parties.

The percentage of your surveyed youth reporting each of these five developmental deficits is shown for the total sample, gender, and grade level. Each deficit is correlated here with a high-risk behavior.

Table 11. Percent of Youth Reporting Developmental Deficits											
Deficit	Definition	Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
			M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alone at Home	Spends two hours or more alone per school day	42	41	44	26	34	39	47	51	55	53
TV Overexposure	Watches TV or videos three or more hours per school day	32	34	30	32	31	30	29	37	36	31
Physical Abuse	Reports once or more, "Have you ever been physically harmed (that is, where someone caused you to have a scar, black & blue marks, welts, bleeding, or a broken bone) by someone in your family or someone living with you?"	34	35	32	37	29	32	41	33	33	31
Victim of Violence	Reports once or more, "How many times in the last 2 years have you been the victim of physical violence where someone caused you physical pain or injury?"	41	46	35	38	34	36	47	45	45	42
Drinking Parties	Reports attending one or more parties in the last year "where other kids your age were drinking."	57	56	58	24	30	46	69	78	90	89

Questions to Consider

- Do differences exist between males and females? Between grade levels? How can you respond positively?
- How do any deficits noted here relate to Developmental Asset levels in your youth?
- What other deficits are present in the community that may underlie the deficit conditions (such as poverty, racism, and social exclusion) noted here?

Section 4

Thriving Indicators and Risk-Taking

Youth were asked about the presence of eight thriving indicators in their lives—factors commonly valued and accepted by developmental experts as important elements of healthy human development. Thriving behaviors that were measured include succeeding in school, helping others, valuing diversity, taking care of one's health, showing leadership, resisting danger, delaying gratification, and overcoming adversity. Researchers have noted a simultaneous decrease in these positive, health-promoting behaviors as youth risk-taking behaviors increase.

In this section you'll also find information about young people's involvement in risk-taking behaviors. Youth were asked specifically about their experience with 24 risk-taking behaviors, including using inhalants, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other illicit drugs, as well as driving under the influence of alcohol and riding with an impaired driver.

Other risk behaviors that were measured include early sexual intercourse, antisocial behaviors (shoplifting, vandalism, and trouble with police), committing acts of violence, school truancy, gambling, eating disorders, depression, and attempted suicide. Each of these behaviors is identified and measured by total sample, gender, and grade.

You will also find data here related to patterns of high-risk behaviors that indicate repeated acts of risk-taking. Perhaps more important than a young person's involvement in *individual* acts of risk-taking is the repeated involvement in behaviors that compromise well-being. A young person who reports using alcohol once or more in the past month is considered to be involved in *risk-taking behavior*. However, a young person who has used alcohol *three* or more times in the past month (almost every week) is considered to be engaging in a *high-risk pattern of behavior* and is even more likely to experience negative consequences related to the behavior. When negative, and sometimes potentially life-threatening, behaviors among young people become more common, it is especially important to look for root causes and conditions leading to these behaviors.

Eight Indicators of Thriving

Table 12 presents the percentages of your youth who report each of eight thriving indicators, including valuing diversity, succeeding in school, helping others, maintaining good health, showing leadership, resisting danger, delaying gratification, and overcoming adversity. The table defines thriving indicators and presents percentages for each by total sample, gender, and grade level.

Table 12. Percentages of Eight Thriving Indicators in Your Youth												
Thriving Indicator	Definition	Total Sample	Gender		Grade							
			M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Succeeds in School	Gets mostly As on report card	14	13	16	20	11	14	13	10	15	16	
Helps Others	Helps friends or neighbors one or more hours per week	80	77	84	78	78	81	83	76	84	84	
Values Diversity	Places high importance on getting to know people of other racial/ethnic groups	53	49	58	51	46	43	57	56	62	62	
Maintains Good Health	Pays attention to healthy nutrition and exercise	51	49	54	57	54	46	48	50	52	50	
Exhibits Leadership	Has been a leader of a group or organization in the last 12 months	63	66	60	63	60	61	67	60	62	67	
Resists Danger	Avoids doing things that are dangerous	20	16	25	27	27	22	16	12	13	18	
Delays Gratification	Saves money for something special rather than spending it all right away	40	43	38	43	40	40	43	31	43	45	
Overcomes Adversity	Does not give up when things get difficult	65	71	59	68	65	61	61	70	66	66	

Questions to Consider

- In what areas is the community doing a particularly good job of nurturing thriving behaviors in young people?
- Are there differences between males and females, or across grade levels? If so, why?
- How do differences in thriving behaviors relate to differences in assets, deficits, and risk-taking behaviors?

Nine Risk-Taking Behaviors Related to Substance Use

In Table 13 you'll find the percentage of your youth who report nine risk-taking behaviors related specifically to substance use, including alcohol, tobacco, and/or other illicit drug use.

The table presents each substance mentioned above and nine related risk-taking behaviors, as well as how these behaviors are defined within the survey. Percentages are reported for each risk behavior by total sample, gender, and grade level.

Table 13. Percent of Youth Who Report Nine Risk-Taking Behaviors Related to Substance Use												
Risk-Taking Behavior		Total Sample	Gender		Grade							
Category	Definition		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Alcohol	Used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days	39	40	37	12	18	34	50	54	62	64	
	Got drunk once or more in the last two weeks	34	35	32	16	16	29	40	48	53	51	
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days	34	33	35	13	18	38	43	49	44	45	
	Used smokeless tobacco once or more in the last 12 months	19	25	13	13	10	21	22	29	20	22	
Inhalants	Sniffed or inhaled substances to get high once or more in the last 30 days	7	5	8	11	8	6	10	4	2	1	
Marijuana	Used marijuana once or more in the last 12 months	37	39	35	10	21	35	48	52	51	59	
Other Drug Use⁸	Used other illicit drugs once or more in the last 12 months	6	6	6	5	4	4	7	6	8	9	
Driving and Alcohol	Drove after drinking once or more in the last 12 months	14	14	15	3	5	10	15	20	22	40	
	Rode (once or more in the last 12 months) with a driver who had been drinking	44	43	45	38	29	44	44	51	53	65	

Questions to Consider

- What percentage of your youth reports substance-related risk-taking behaviors?
- How do substance use differences relate to differences in reported numbers of assets or reported numbers of deficits you have already identified?
- Which asset categories could have a positive effect on risk-taking behaviors?

⁸ Includes LSD, heroin, and amphetamines

Fifteen Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors

In Table 14 you'll find data about eight risk categories and 15 associated risk-taking behaviors in which your youth report involvement, including early sexual intercourse, anti-social behavior, violence, school truancy, gambling, eating disorders, depression, and attempted suicide. Percentages are reported for each behavior by total sample, gender, and grade level.

Table 14. Percent of Youth Reporting 15 Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors											
Risk-Taking Behavior		Total	Gender		Grade						
Category	Definition	Sample	M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sexual Intercourse	Has had sexual intercourse one or more times	37	39	34	10	12	26	37	64	62	76
Anti-Social Behavior	Shoplifted once or more in the last 12 months	36	43	28	28	32	42	45	38	33	32
	Committed vandalism once or more in the last 12 months	28	33	22	20	22	30	37	32	30	26
	Got into trouble with police once or more in the last 12 months	34	41	25	28	30	37	40	35	33	36
Violence	Hit someone once or more in the last 12 months	57	65	47	61	59	58	63	53	47	48
	Physically hurt someone once or more in the last 12 months	27	36	17	23	23	30	33	29	25	25
	Used a weapon to get something from a person once or more in the last 12 months	7	10	3	10	8	6	7	9	5	4
	Been in a group fight once or more in the last 12 months	38	44	30	40	43	41	42	38	29	19
	Carried a weapon for protection once or more in the last 12 months	19	26	10	18	19	21	19	19	18	13
	Threatened physical harm to someone once or more in the last 12 months	33	39	27	24	25	37	42	39	31	35
School Truancy	Skipped school once or more in the last four weeks	47	48	46	33	35	44	47	60	57	64
Gambling	Gambled once or more in the last 12 months	41	48	34	29	31	40	38	50	55	56
Eating Disorder	Has engaged in bulimic or anorexic behavior	20	21	19	25	23	20	20	23	14	10
Depression	Felt sad or depressed most or all of the time in the last month	15	11	19	18	12	11	19	15	13	16
Attempted Suicide	Has attempted suicide one or more times	22	14	30	9	18	19	27	33	26	22

Questions to Consider

- Looking at positive percentages, what school programs appear to be effective for youth?
- Which of the additional 15 risk-taking behaviors appear to be a concern for your youth?
- Do differences emerge between male and female reports of risk behaviors? Across various grade levels?
- How can you thoughtfully engage young people in a discussion of these issues?

High-Risk Behavior Patterns

Table 15 presents the percentages of your surveyed youth who report problematic levels of the 10 high-risk behavior patterns by total sample, gender, and by grade.

Patterns of high-risk behaviors shown here represent higher incidence levels of 24 previously reported, individual behaviors noted in Tables 13 and 14. The 10 high-risk behavior patterns presented here are defined by both single and combined (related) risk behaviors.

Table 15. Percent of Youth Reporting 10 High-Risk Behavior Patterns											
High-Risk Behavior Pattern		Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
Category	Definition		M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	Has used alcohol three or more times in the last 30 days or got drunk once or more in the last two weeks	37	38	35	17	19	31	44	52	56	57
Tobacco	Smokes one or more cigarettes every day or uses chewing tobacco frequently	29	28	30	8	13	28	36	48	42	39
Illicit Drugs	Used illicit drugs multiple times in the last 12 months ⁹	29	31	26	6	13	26	39	43	46	43
Sexual Intercourse	Has had sexual intercourse three or more times in lifetime	24	24	24	2	4	10	21	45	52	62
Depression/Suicide	Is frequently depressed and/or has attempted suicide	29	21	38	24	25	24	34	39	32	29
Anti-Social Behavior	Has been involved in three or more incidents of shoplifting, trouble with police, or vandalism in the last 12 months	30	36	23	19	25	32	40	31	30	32
Violence	Has engaged in three or more acts of fighting, hitting, injuring a person, carrying or using a weapon, or threatening physical harm in the last 12 months	46	56	35	47	47	48	52	45	40	39
School Problems	Has skipped school two or more days in the last four weeks and/or has below a C average	41	42	39	28	29	36	43	56	50	52
Driving and Alcohol	Has driven after drinking or ridden with a drinking driver three or more times in the last 12 months	20	21	19	9	7	15	21	30	27	43
Gambling	Has gambled three or more times in the last 12 months	20	26	14	13	11	17	21	29	26	32

Questions to Consider

- What percent of your youth reports high-risk behavior patterns?
- What differences are reported between males and females? Across grade levels?

⁹ Defined as one or more of the following yearly drug use rates: 3 or more uses of marijuana, 2 or more uses of LSD, 2 or more uses of heroin, 2 or more uses of amphetamines.

Section 5

The Protective Power of Developmental Assets

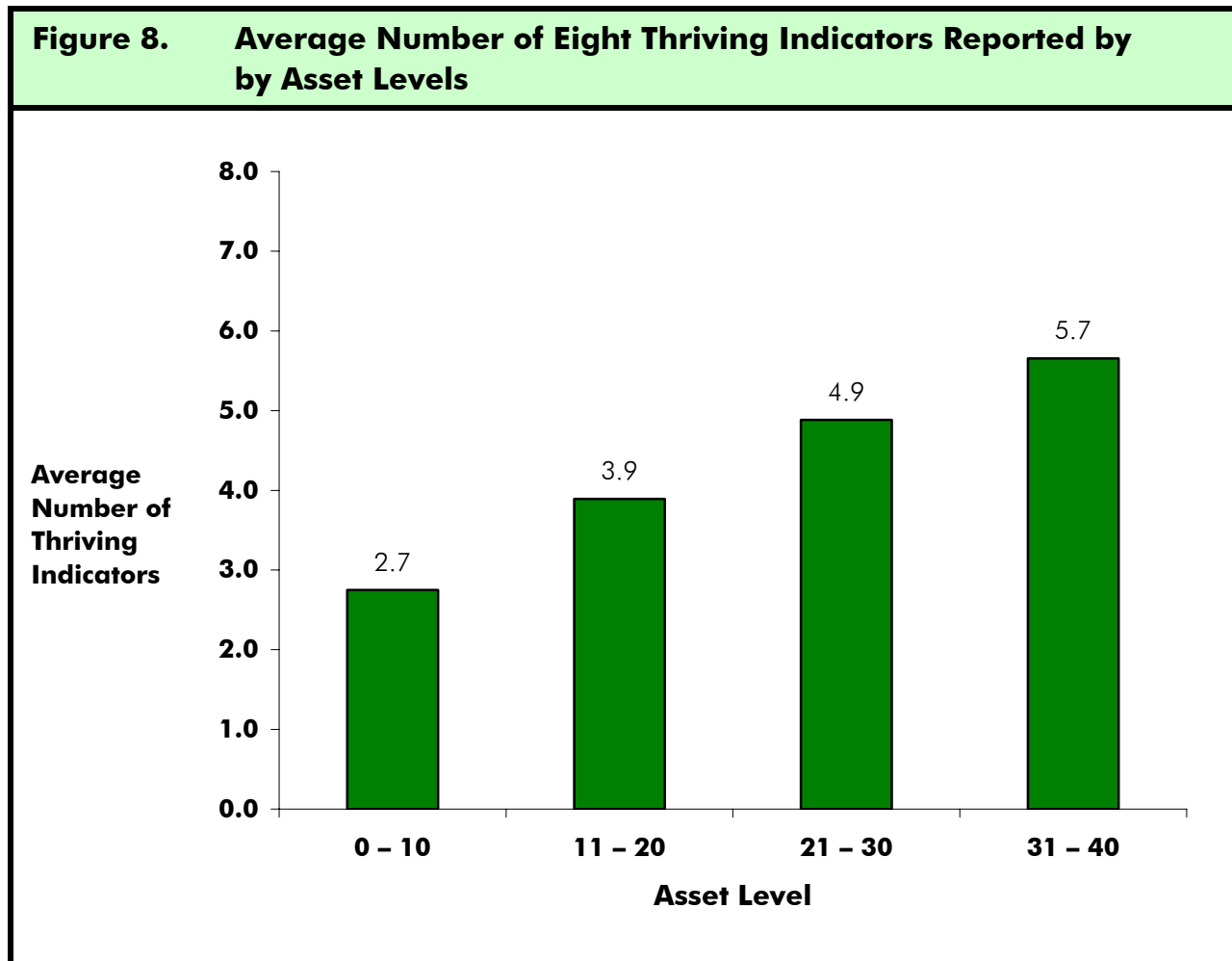
The choices young people make about how they act, what they do with their time, and who they will become are not made simply by chance. Their decisions are based upon a web of external and internal influences, including the positive influence of Developmental Assets. Survey data in this section reflect how the assets experienced by young people affect the choices they make regarding both risk-taking behaviors and thriving indicators (described in section 4).

Search Institute's studies have consistently shown that young people who experience more of the Developmental Assets engage in fewer risk-taking behaviors. They are also more likely to report indicators of thriving. In other words, the more assets a young person has, the more likely he or she will make healthy lifestyle choices, regardless of a young person's age, race, gender, or geographic origins. It is likely that the data for your youth will follow this same pattern.

Average Thriving Levels and Developmental Asset Levels

Just as assets protect against negative behaviors, they also promote positive behaviors. Having multiple protective factors (assets) as a young adolescent is more influential in ensuring positive youth outcomes than having risk factors (deficits and risky behaviors). In other words, the influence of assets is stronger than individual risk factors.¹⁰

As Figure 8 illustrates, youth with more Developmental Assets generally report higher average levels of thriving indicators (reported by asset level in groups of 10).



Questions to Consider

- Do assets make a positive difference for your youth? What conclusions, if any, can you draw from the data?
- Do your youth follow the typical pattern of reports of increasing levels of thriving indicators along with higher levels of assets? How can you continue to support thriving indicators in youth?

¹⁰ See Scales, P. C. Ph.D. and Leffert, Nancy, Ph.D. (2004). *Developmental Assets: A Synthesis of the Scientific Research on Adolescent Development* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Individual Thriving Indicators and Related Asset Levels

Strong and consistent evidence indicates that youth who have more assets also report more thriving indicators. Here you'll find data about the positive consequences of Developmental Assets expressed by the percentage of your surveyed youth who report each of eight thriving indicators. These findings are reported for the total sample and by asset level.

Table 16. Percent of Youth Reporting Eight Thriving Indicators by Asset Level						
Thriving Indicator	Definition	Total Sample	Number of Assets¹¹			
			0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
Succeeds in School	Gets mostly As on report card	14	3	12	27	43
Helps Others	Helps friends or neighbors one or more hours per week	80	65	88	92	87
Values Diversity	Places high importance getting to know people of other racial/ethnic groups	53	38	53	68	94
Maintains Good Health	Pays attention to healthy nutrition and exercise	51	30	49	73	94
Exhibits Leadership	Has been a leader of a group or organization in the last 12 months	63	51	65	77	84
Resists Danger	Avoids doing things that are dangerous	20	7	18	27	29
Delays Gratification	Saves money for something special rather than spending it all right away	40	23	39	56	71
Overcomes Adversity	Does not give up when things get difficult	65	58	65	70	73

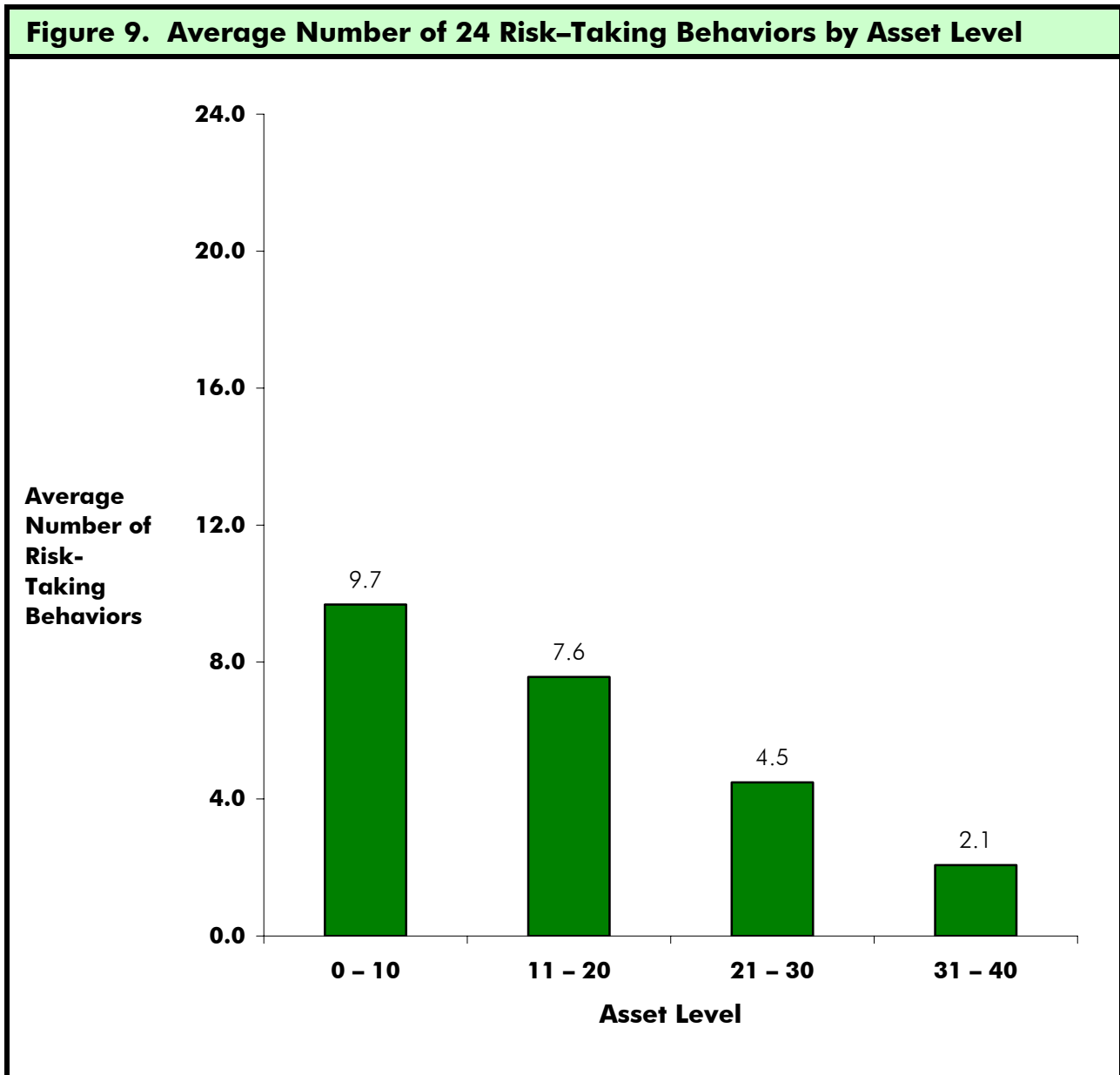
Questions to Consider

- What pattern of thriving indicators do you notice as you scan the table of asset levels?
- Which thriving indicators require additional attention by your community?

¹¹ One or more of the Number of Assets columns may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

24 Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level

This figure illustrates the powerful effect assets have on reducing risk-taking behaviors among youth. It is likely that your data reflect a higher average number of risk-taking behaviors among students who also report lower asset levels. The data below show the average number of risk-taking behaviors by asset levels reported by your youth.



Questions to Consider

- Do assets make a positive difference for your youth? What examples do you see in young people?
- Do your youth follow the expected pattern of decreasing levels of risk-taking behaviors with higher levels of assets? If not, are there other extenuating circumstances?

Risk-Taking Behaviors Related to Substance Use

The protective properties of Developmental Assets are clearly illustrated by the relationship of assets to youth substance use. Typically, strong and consistent evidence shows that youth who report more assets also report fewer risk-taking behaviors.

In the table below you'll find the percentage of your youth who report nine risk-taking behaviors related specifically to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. These findings, similar to those in Figure 9, are based on the total survey sample and are reported for each behavior by asset level (in asset groups of 10).

Table 17. Percent of Youth Reporting Nine Substance Use-Related Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level						
Risk-Taking Behavior		Total Sample	Number of Assets ¹²			
Category	Definition		0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
Alcohol	Used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days	39	59	45	27	10
	Got drunk once or more in the last two weeks	34	52	38	23	16
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days	34	54	38	22	13
	Used smokeless tobacco once or more in the last 12 months	19	30	22	10	3
Inhalants	Sniffed or inhaled substances to get high once or more in the last 12 months	7	10	6	3	3
Marijuana	Used marijuana once or more in the last 12 months	37	63	44	20	13
Other Drug Use¹³	Used other illicit drugs once or more in the last 12 months	6	9	7	3	0
Driving and Alcohol	Drove after drinking once or more in the last 12 months	14	22	17	8	6
	Rode (once or more in the last 12 months) with a driver who had been drinking	44	55	48	41	23

Questions to Consider

- What general pattern of risk-taking behaviors do you note as you move across asset levels?
- Is your community's pattern consistent with results Search Institute has observed in its studies? If not, why not?
- What actions can you take to help reduce substance-use risk behaviors in your community?

¹² One or more of the Number of Assets columns may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

¹³ Includes LSD, heroin, and amphetamines.

Incidence of Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors

This table presents 15 additional risk-taking behaviors related to actions potentially harmful to young people. Percentages are reported by total sample and asset level (in asset groups of 10). Strong and consistent evidence shows that youth who report more assets also report fewer risk-taking behaviors.

Table 18. Percent of Youth Reporting 15 Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level						
Risk-Taking Behavior		Total Sample	Number of Assets¹⁴			
Category	Definition		0–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
Sexual Intercourse	Has had sexual intercourse one or more times	37	45	43	32	17
Anti-Social Behavior	Shoplifted once or more in the last 12 months	36	53	39	19	13
	Committed vandalism once or more in the last 12 months	28	49	30	11	6
	Got into trouble with police once or more in the last 12 months	34	45	37	23	19
Violence	Hit someone once or more in the last 12 months	57	70	63	40	29
	Physically hurt someone once or more in the last 12 months	27	39	28	14	13
	Used a weapon to get something from a person once or more in the last 12 months	7	10	7	2	3
	Been in a group fight once or more in the last 12 months	38	48	41	25	10
	Carried a weapon for protection once or more in the last 12 months	19	29	20	7	3
	Threatened physical harm to someone once or more in the last 12 months	33	50	38	22	10
School Truancy	Skipped school once or more in the last four weeks	47	67	51	28	16
Gambling	Gambled once or more in the last 12 months	41	51	46	35	6
Eating Disorder	Has engaged in bulimic or anorexic behavior	20	19	19	17	10
Depression	Felt sad or depressed most or all of the time in the last month	15	20	14	9	3
Attempted Suicide	Has attempted suicide one or more times	22	30	23	16	10

Questions to Consider

- How can our community continue to support youth in reducing risk-taking behaviors?
- What general pattern of risk-taking behaviors do you notice as you move across asset levels?
- Is the pattern consistent with what you would expect to find, and if not, why not?

¹⁴ One or more of the Number of Assets columns may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

High-Risk Behavior Patterns and the Protective Power of Assets

Strong and consistent evidence shows that youth report more assets when they also report fewer high-risk behaviors. This table presents data that demonstrates an inverse relationship between patterns of high-risk behaviors and levels of Developmental Assets in young people.

Table 19 defines 10 high-risk behavior patterns and gives percentages for each pattern by total sample and asset level (in asset groups of 10).

Table 19. Percent of Youth Reporting 10 High-Risk Behavior Patterns by Asset Level						
High-Risk Behavior Pattern		Total Sample	Number of Assets¹⁵			
Category	Definition		0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
Alcohol	Has used alcohol three or more times in the last 30 days or got drunk once or more in the last two weeks	37	55	42	25	16
Tobacco	Smokes one or more cigarettes every day or uses chewing tobacco frequently	29	45	32	19	13
Illicit Drugs¹⁶	Used illicit drugs multiple times in the last 12 months	29	51	34	13	3
Sexual Intercourse	Has had sexual intercourse three or more times in lifetime	24	29	28	23	7
Depression/Suicide	Is frequently depressed and/or has attempted suicide	29	38	29	21	10
Anti-Social Behavior	Has been involved in three or more incidents of shoplifting, trouble with police, or vandalism in the last 12 months	30	48	33	13	6
Violence	Has engaged in three or more acts of fighting, hitting, injuring a person, carrying or using a weapon, or threatening physical harm in the last 12 months	46	59	53	29	19
School Problems	Has skipped school two or more days in the last four weeks and/or has below a C average	41	60	42	22	7
Driving and Alcohol	Has driven after drinking or ridden with a drinking driver three or more times in the last 12 months	20	27	22	15	10
Gambling	Has gambled three or more times in the last 12 months	20	26	24	13	3

Questions to Consider

- What is the community doing well with regard to reducing youth high-risk behaviors?
- What general pattern of high-risk behaviors do you notice as you scan the asset level data?

¹⁵ One or more of the Number of Assets columns may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

¹⁶ Defined as one or more of the following yearly drug use rates: 3 or more uses of marijuana, 2 or more uses of LSD, 2 or more uses of heroin, 2 or more uses of amphetamines.

Section 6

Portrait of the Four Core Measures

Young people are increasingly exposed to negative behaviors and opportunities for risk-taking. Youth who experience low levels of Developmental Assets and high levels of developmental deficit conditions are particularly vulnerable. In this section, you'll find data describing four core measures related to young people's use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (the four core measures are defined below). This data can be used to meet Drug Free Communities (DFC) grantee reporting requirements established by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

All communities can also use the data in this section to assess student levels of involvement with substance use and abuse. This information is invaluable not only to your efforts to educate the community and develop an action plan for reducing substance use, associated risk behaviors, and deficit factors, but also as a basis for strengthening protective factors (assets) critical to ensuring that your youth thrive. See section 4 for more information on thriving behaviors and their sources.

Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors specifically measures students' use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Selected survey questions address the following four core measures:

- The percentage of youth who report using alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana at least once in the 30 days immediately preceding the survey date.
- The average age at which youth report *first trying* alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana.
- The percentage of youth who report *regular* use of alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana (where "regular" is defined as one or two alcoholic drinks nearly every day and as one or more packs of cigarettes per day; "regular" marijuana use is not defined).
- The percentage of youth who report that their parents feel *regular* use of alcohol is wrong or very wrong, and report that their parents feel *any* use of cigarettes or marijuana is wrong.

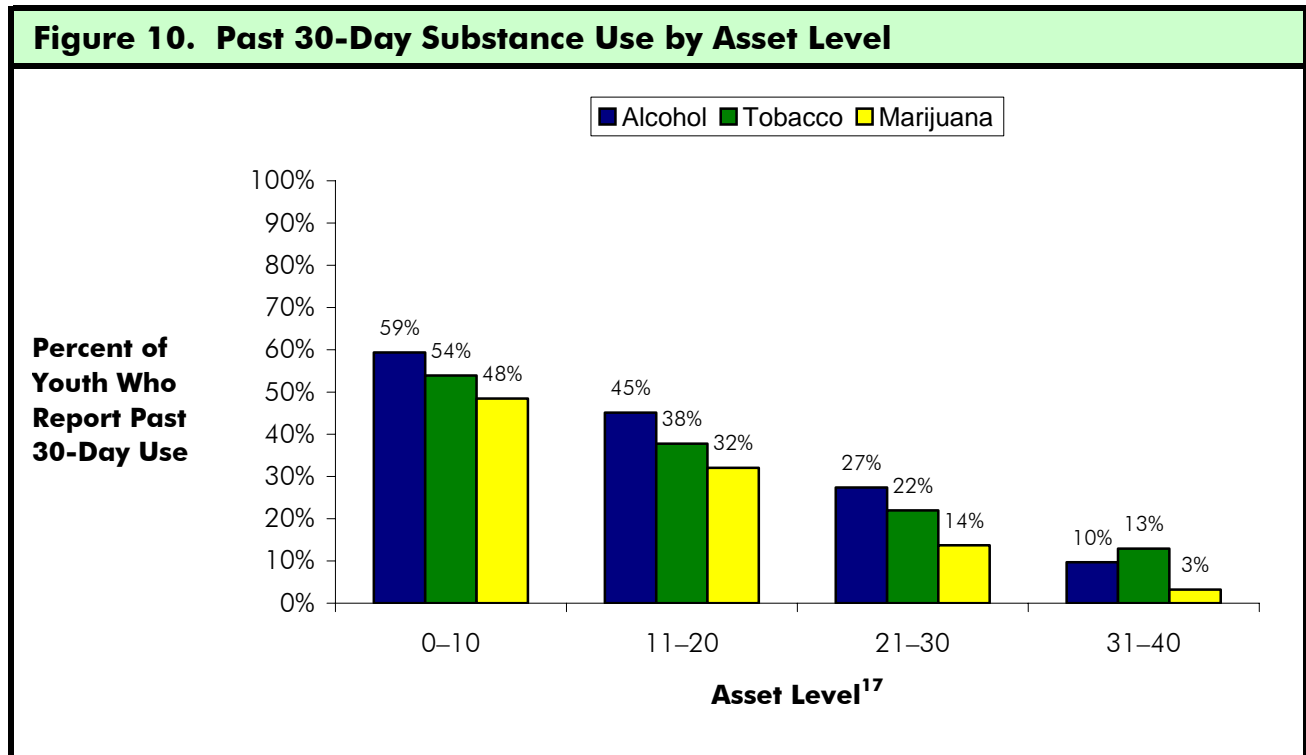
You can use the data in this section to guide school and community prevention activities and asset building efforts that lead to a permanent reduction of negative choices by young people in your community.

Past 30-Day Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana

One of the areas evaluated by the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey relates to students' alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use in the 30 days immediately preceding the survey administration (see Appendix A for the text of questions 83, 86, and 88). The percentages for past 30-day use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana by total sample, gender, and grade are shown in Table 20.

Table 20. Past 30-Day Substance Use by Gender and Grade											
Category	Definition	Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
			M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	Used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days	39	40	37	12	18	34	50	54	62	64
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days	34	33	35	13	18	38	43	49	44	45
Marijuana	Used marijuana once or more in the last 30 days	27	29	25	9	13	29	36	37	40	38

Figure 10 shows how alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use in the 30 days preceding the survey compare across asset levels.



¹⁷ One or more of the Asset Level groups may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

Age of First Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana

Three questions on the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey evaluate the age at which students report first using alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (see Appendix A for the text of questions 93, 94, and 95). Table 21 and Figure 11 present data on age of first alcohol use; Table 22 and Figure 12 address first tobacco use; and Table 23 and Figure 13 summarize the data on first use of marijuana. Data are presented by individual grade levels.

Studies of prevention and intervention programs have shown that such programs can delay (or prevent) the use of alcohol and other substances and behaviors, driving up the reported age of first use, particularly as more youth participate in these programs.

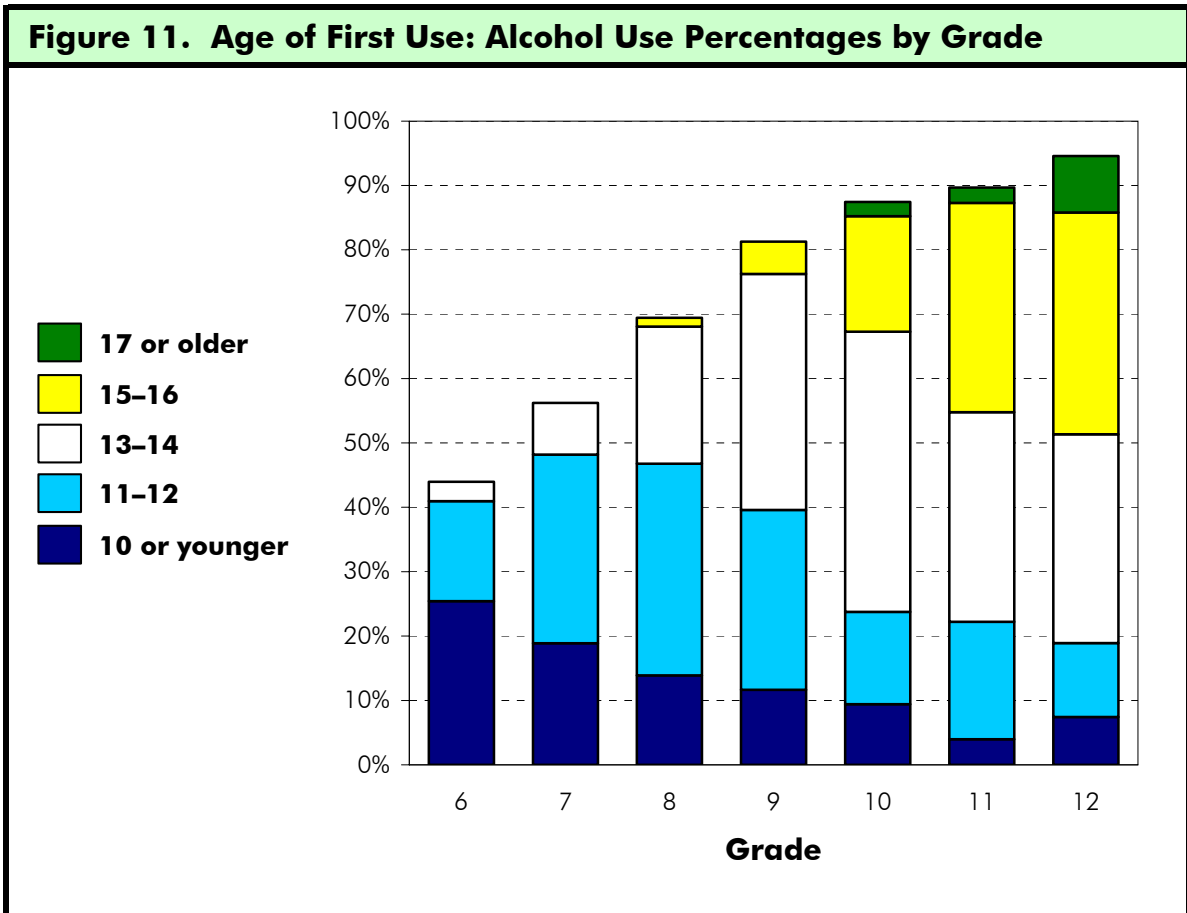
Use caution when drawing conclusions from students' responses to "age of first use" questions. Combining data to report results by total sample or gender tends to produce misleading results. There is a general tendency of older respondents to report an older age of first use of various substances than is reported by younger respondents. Possible reasons for this tendency include:

- The accuracy of youth's recall of their first use of various substances can be expected to decrease as respondents grow older and further removed from the first event.
- Results may be characterized by response bias. In general, youth know that substance use at a young age is not socially acceptable, and they may "recall" an older age of first substance use than is actually the case.

The only way to determine if age of first use is becoming older or younger in any given community is to compare data from studies of that community across multiple years.

First Alcohol Use¹⁸

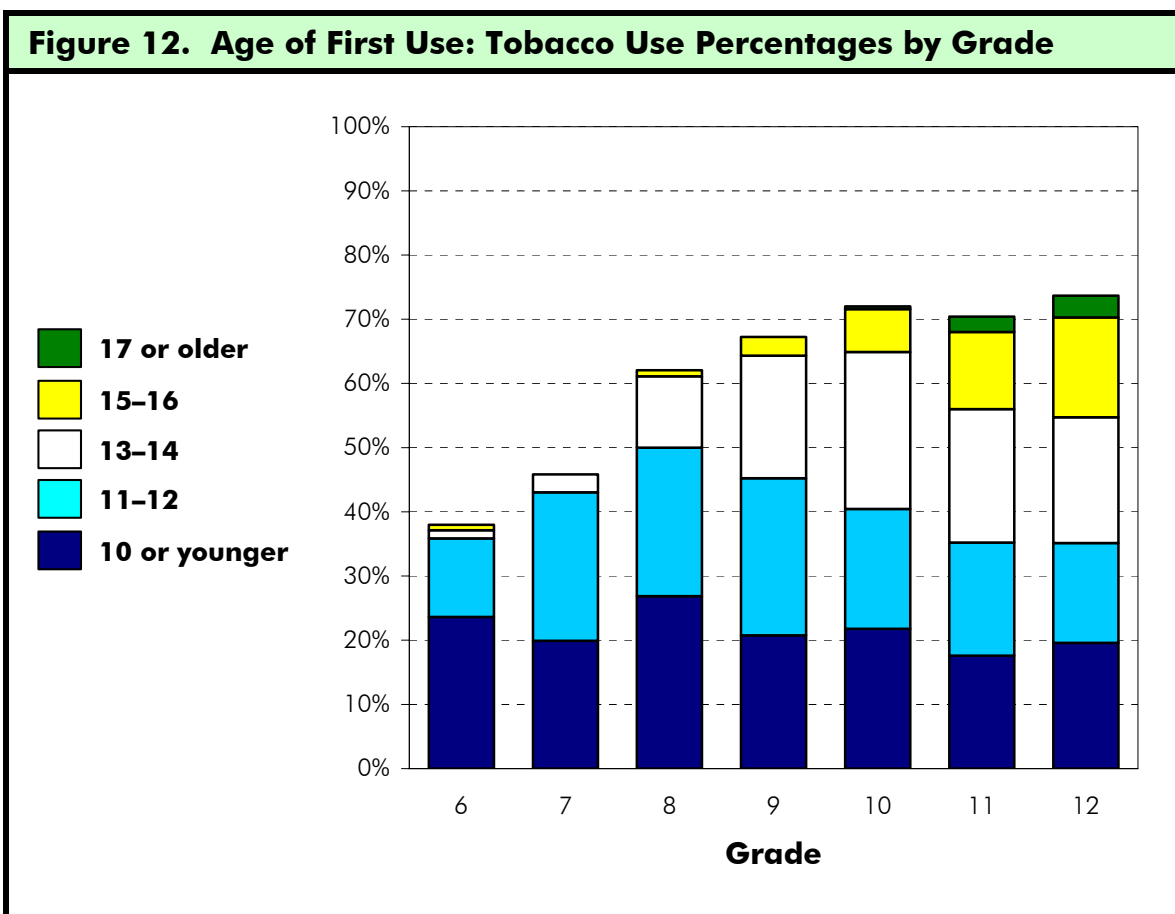
Table 21. Age of First Use: Alcohol Use Percentages by Grade								
Category	Response	Grade						
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	Never used	56%	44%	31%	19%	13%	10%	5%
	10 or younger	25%	19%	14%	12%	9%	4%	7%
	11	10%	18%	14%	13%	5%	7%	3%
	12	5%	12%	19%	15%	9%	11%	8%
	13	3%	7%	16%	22%	20%	13%	11%
	14		1%	5%	15%	23%	20%	22%
	15			1%	5%	14%	21%	21%
	16				0%	4%	12%	14%
	17 or older					2%	2%	9%



¹⁸ See page 6-3 for details about why your data may give a misleading impression that age of first use is trending younger.

First Tobacco Use¹⁹

Table 22. Age of First Use: Tobacco Use Percentages by Grade		Grade						
Category	Response	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tobacco	Never used	62%	54%	38%	33%	28%	30%	26%
	10 or younger	24%	20%	27%	21%	22%	18%	20%
	11	7%	16%	12%	12%	8%	11%	6%
	12	5%	8%	11%	13%	10%	6%	9%
	13	1%	3%	8%	11%	13%	13%	9%
	14			3%	8%	11%	8%	10%
	15	0%		1%	3%	5%	6%	9%
	16	0%				1%	6%	6%
17 or older					0%	2%	3%	



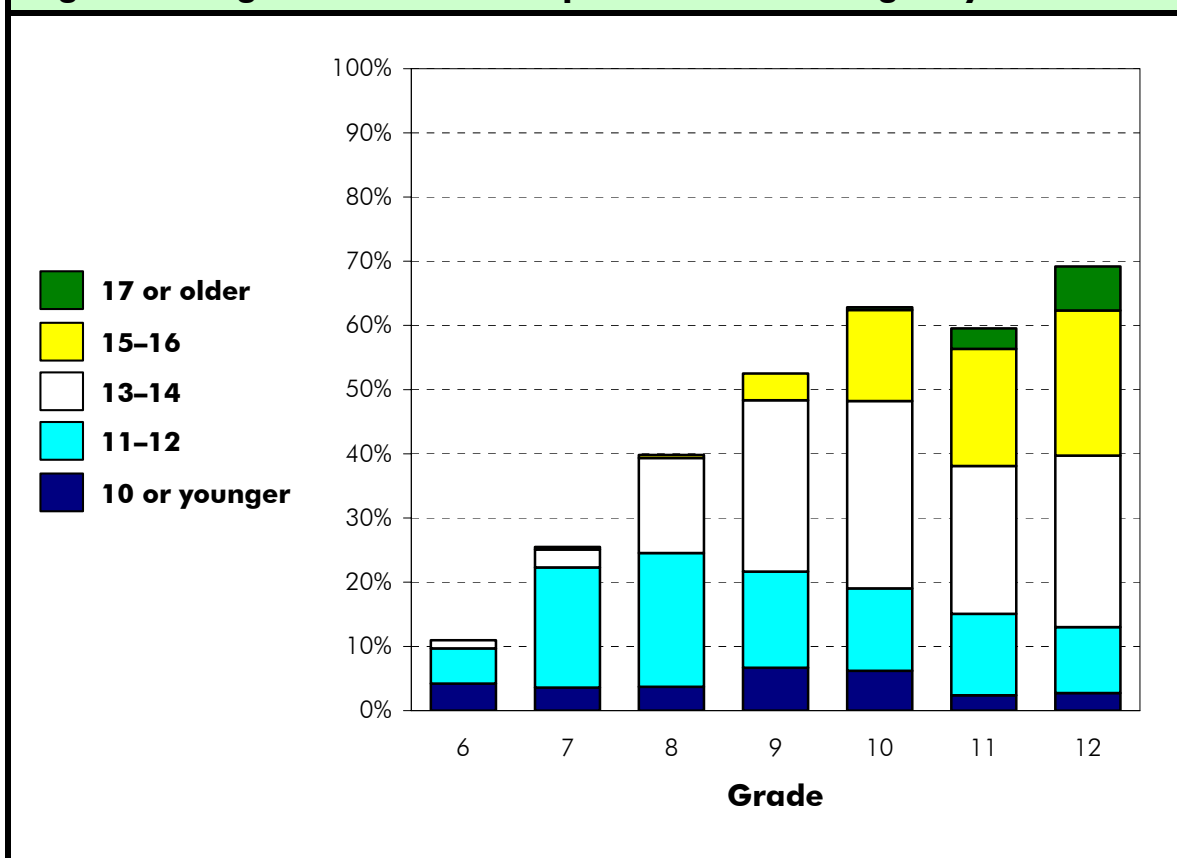
¹⁹ See page 6-3 for details about why your data may give a misleading impression that age of first use is trending younger.

First Marijuana Use²⁰

Table 23. Age of First Use: Marijuana Use Percentages by Grade

Category	Response	Grade						
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Marijuana	Never used	89%	75%	60%	48%	37%	40%	31%
	10 or younger	4%	4%	4%	7%	6%	2%	3%
	11	3%	12%	7%	5%	4%	2%	4%
	12	2%	7%	14%	10%	8%	10%	6%
	13	1%	2%	11%	17%	12%	13%	14%
	14		1%	4%	10%	17%	10%	13%
	15		0%	0%	4%	7%	11%	12%
	16				0%	8%	7%	11%
	17 or older					0%	3%	7%

Figure 13. Age of First Use: Marijuana Use Percentages by Grade



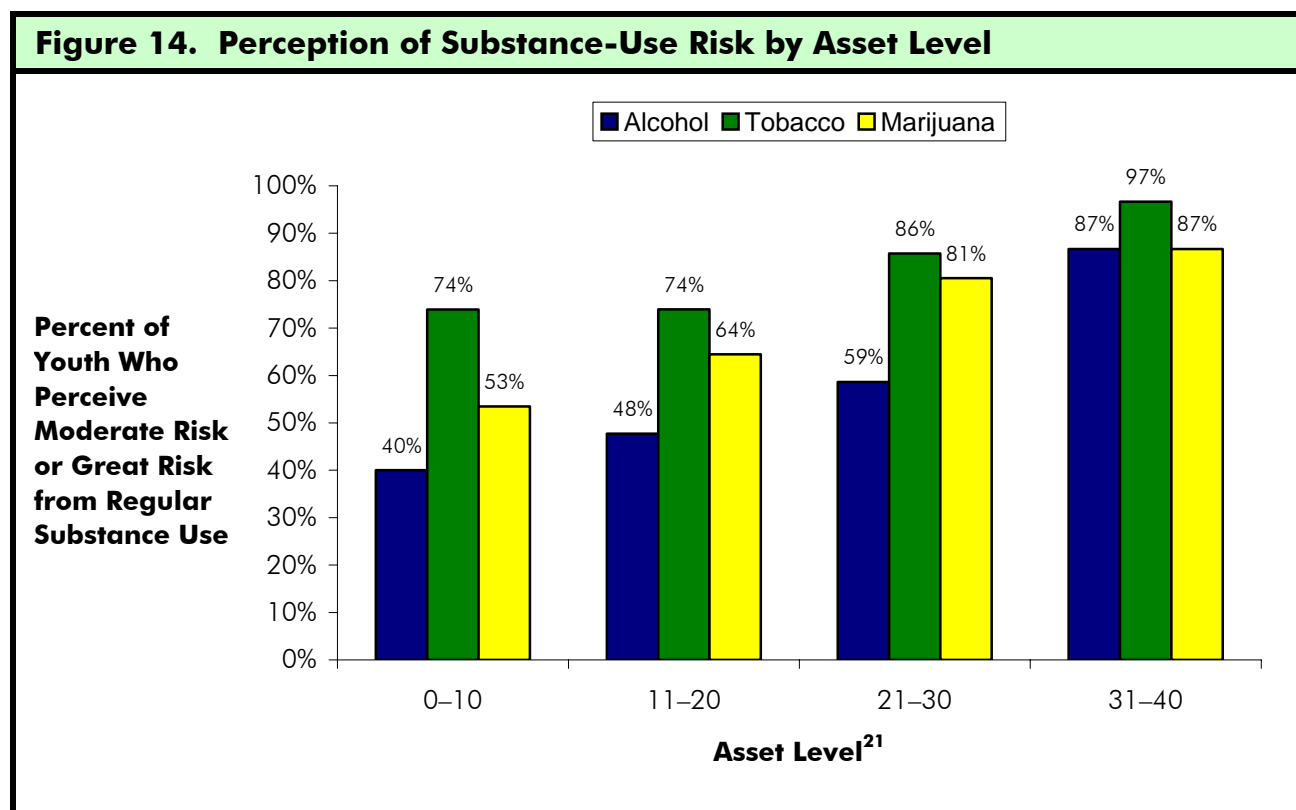
²⁰ See page 6-3 for details about why your data may give a misleading impression that age of first use is trending younger.

Youth Perception of Risk of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use

One of the four core measures evaluated by the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey is students' perception of the risks involved in using alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (see Appendix A for the text of questions 96, 97, and 98). The percentages for youth perception of risk of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use are recorded in Table 24.

Table 24. Perception of Substance-Use Risk by Gender and Grade											
Category	Definition <i>Moderate Risk or Great Risk</i>	Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
			M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	One or two drinks nearly every day	49	46	52	43	48	42	53	49	54	57
Tobacco	One or more packs of cigarettes per day	73	71	75	62	66	69	82	72	85	86
Marijuana	Smoke marijuana regularly	65	63	67	63	63	64	69	63	62	70

Figure 14 shows youth perception of the risks involved in substance use compared across asset levels.

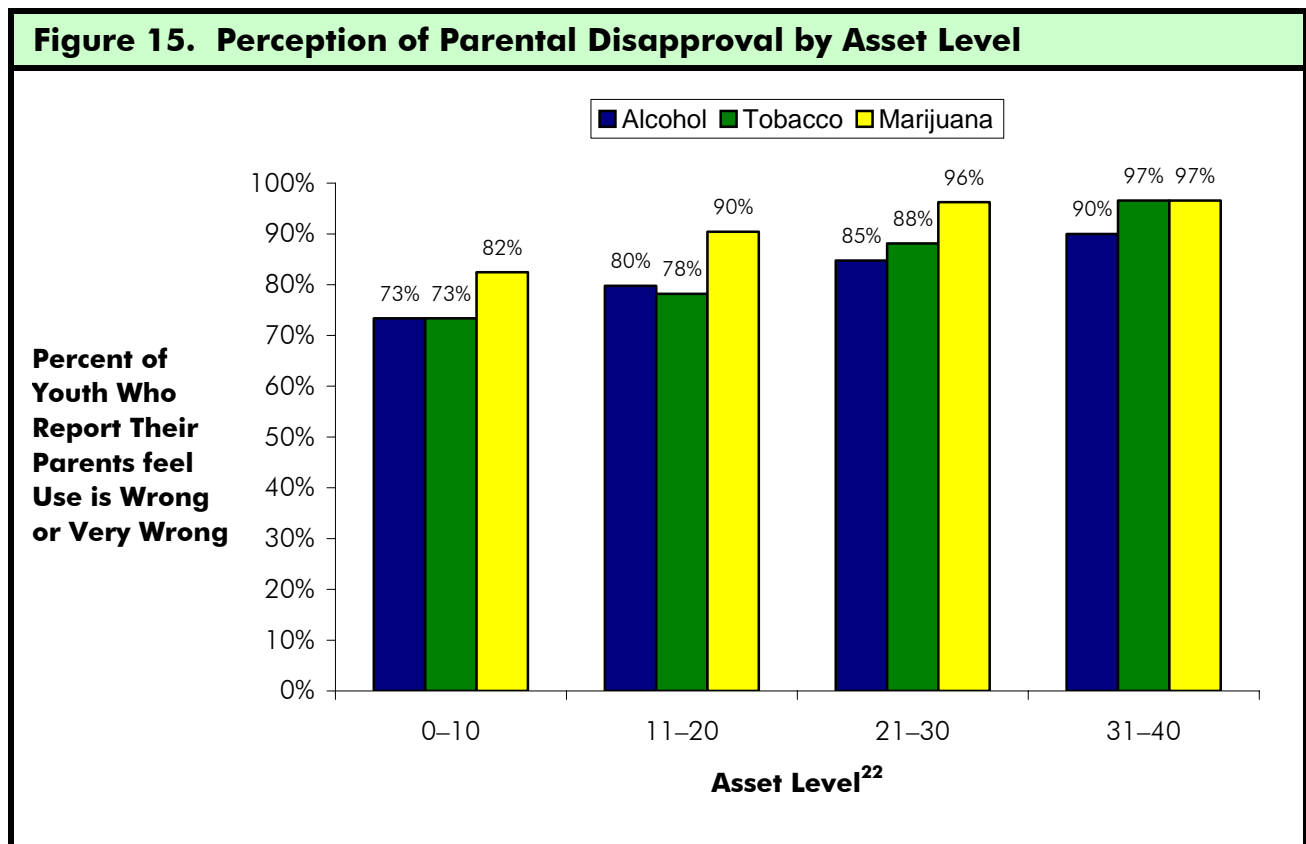


²¹ One or more of the Asset Level groups may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

Youth Perception of Parental Disapproval of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use

The *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey evaluates students' perception of their parents' disapproval of youth use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (see Appendix A for the text of questions 90, 91, and 92). Percentages for youth perception of parental disapproval of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use are recorded below in Table 25 and Figure 15.

Table 25. Perception of Parental Disapproval of Substance Use											
Category	Definition Wrong or Very Wrong	Total Sample	Gender		Grade						
			M	F	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	Drink regularly	81	80	83	91	93	90	78	76	71	57
Tobacco	Smoke cigarettes	81	81	80	91	91	87	76	68	76	70
Marijuana	Smoke marijuana	90	88	92	96	95	92	85	84	90	86



²² One or more of the Asset Level groups may be blank due to fewer than 20 youth representing that asset level. Reporting on small numbers of youth yields unreliable results, and could potentially compromise anonymity.

Four Core Measures Data Summary

Table 26 summarizes how your students responded to all questions related to the four core measures measured by the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey.

Table 26. Summary of Four Core Measures Data													
		Past 30-Day Use			Perception of Risk			Perception of Parental Disapproval			Age of First Use		
		Alc	Tob	Mar	Alc	Tob	Mar	Alc	Tob	Mar	Alc	Tob	Mar
Total Sample	*%	39.1	34.4	27.2	48.5	72.9	64.7	81.3	80.8	90.2	12.5	11.7	12.9
	n	565	498	391	703	1054	931	1173	1162	1295	1040	864	623
	N	1444	1449	1438	1448	1446	1439	1443	1438	1436	1439	1448	1447
Male	*%	40.3	33.4	29.1	45.7	71.2	62.6	79.8	81.3	88.4	12.5	11.8	12.8
	n	306	255	221	349	543	476	606	611	664	547	427	333
	N	760	763	759	764	763	760	759	752	751	758	763	763
Female	*%	37.0	35.1	24.7	51.7	75.0	67.4	83.2	80.4	92.3	12.6	11.6	13.0
	n	246	234	163	344	498	445	553	536	615	477	420	277
	N	665	667	660	665	664	660	665	667	666	662	666	665
Grade 6	*%	12.0	13.2	8.9	42.7	61.7	63.1	90.6	91.3	95.7	10.7	10.7	11.0
	n	28	31	21	100	145	147	211	211	221	102	90	26
	N	234	235	235	234	235	233	233	231	231	232	237	237
Grade 7	*%	18.3	17.9	12.9	48.4	65.7	63.1	92.8	90.8	95.2	11.2	10.9	11.4
	n	46	45	32	122	165	157	233	227	236	140	115	64
	N	251	251	248	252	251	249	251	250	248	249	251	251
Grade 8	*%	34.1	37.7	28.8	42.4	68.7	63.6	90.3	86.8	92.5	11.8	11.2	12.1
	n	73	81	62	92	149	138	195	184	196	150	134	86
	N	214	215	215	217	217	217	216	212	212	216	216	216
Grade 9	*%	49.6	42.8	35.7	52.7	81.7	68.6	78.0	76.4	85.5	12.4	11.7	12.6
	n	120	104	85	127	197	164	188	185	206	195	162	126
	N	242	243	238	241	241	239	241	242	241	240	241	240
Grade 10	*%	54.0	49.1	37.2	48.7	71.6	63.1	75.6	67.9	84.4	13.3	12.1	13.3
	n	121	111	84	110	161	142	170	152	190	195	162	142
	N	224	226	226	226	225	225	225	224	225	223	225	226
Grade 11	*%	61.9	44.4	39.7	53.6	85.5	61.8	71.2	76.2	90.5	13.8	12.5	13.8
	n	78	56	50	67	106	76	89	96	114	113	88	75
	N	126	126	126	125	124	123	125	126	126	126	125	126
Grade 12	*%	63.5	44.6	37.9	56.8	86.5	70.3	57.1	69.6	85.8	14.1	12.8	14.1
	n	94	66	55	84	128	104	84	103	127	140	109	101
	N	148	148	145	148	148	148	147	148	148	148	148	146

Notes:

* In Table 26 the rows marked with an asterisk (*) reflect **percentages** of youth who meet the criteria appropriate to the particular column for Past 30-Day Use, Perception of Risk, and Perception of Parental Disapproval and the **mean age** in years for Age of First Use.

n Rows marked with a lower case n report the **number** of students who meet the criteria, or the **number** of students whose responses were averaged.

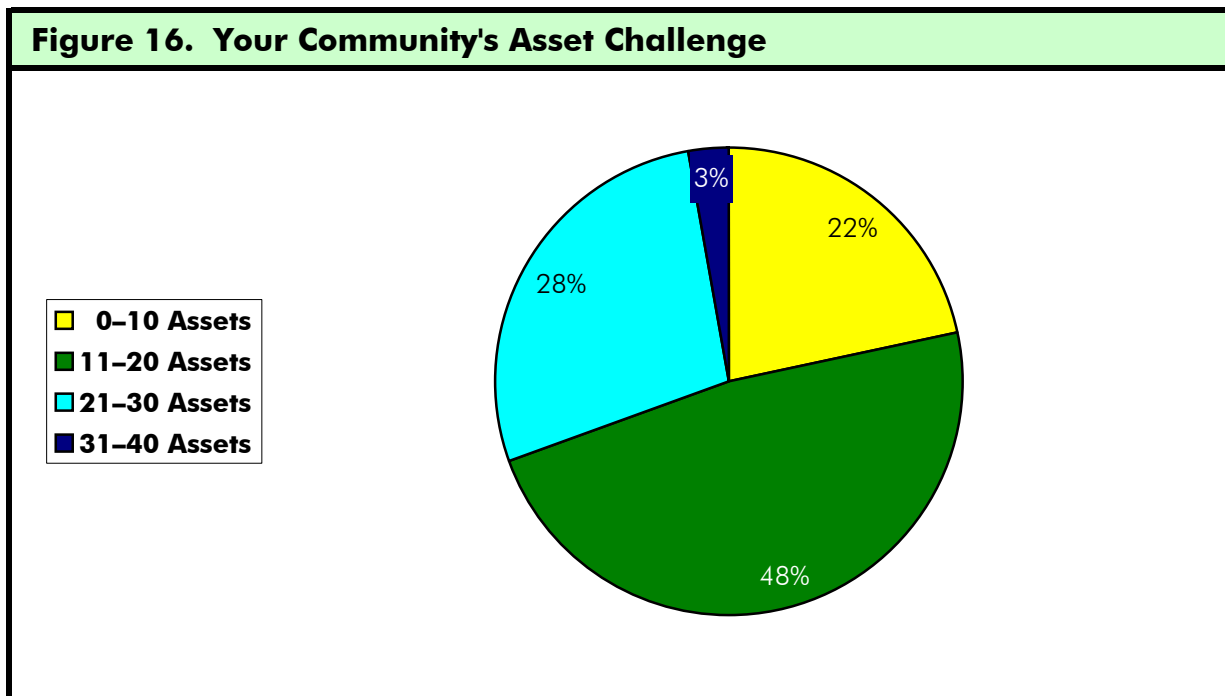
N Rows marked with an upper case N report the **number** of students who responded to the relevant question.

Section 7

Taking Action

Assets are cumulative—and the more assets, the better. Search Institute's research consistently shows that the more assets young people have, the less likely they are to be involved in risk-taking behaviors. And multiple indicators of thriving, including school academic success, increase as assets increase. Figure 16 presents the distribution of assets in your community.

While well-intentioned youth development efforts often focus on the consequences of asset “depletion,” the problems we see now will persist, and likely increase, unless we place a major emphasis on rebuilding the asset foundation for our youth.



Asset-building communities galvanize people, organizations, institutions, and systems to take action around a shared understanding of positive development. Ultimately, strengthening and rebuilding the developmental framework of a community is a movement led by the people—parents, relatives, educators, youth workers, religious leaders, and other concerned adults—to create a community-wide sense of common purpose.

Residents and community leaders are part of the same team moving in the same direction. Asset building creates a culture in which all residents are encouraged and expected, by virtue of their membership in the community, to promote the positive development of youth.

Strengthening the Foundation of Developmental Assets

How do you strengthen Developmental Assets for all young people? Search Institute has identified six principles to help guide the process:²³

1. **All young people need assets:** While it is crucial to pay special attention to youth who have the least resources (economically and/or emotionally), **all** children and adolescents will benefit from having even more assets than they now have.
2. **Everyone can build assets:** All adults, youth, and children can play a role in developing assets by spreading positive messages to and about young people across the community.
3. **Building assets is an ongoing process:** Asset development starts when a child is born, and continues through high school and beyond.
4. **Relationships are crucial:** A key to asset development is strong relationships between adults and young people, between young people and their peers, and between teenagers and younger children.
5. **Send consistent messages:** Asset building requires sending consistent, positive messages to youth and adults about what is important.
6. **Repeat the message—again and again:** Young people need to hear the same positive messages and feel support, over and over, from many different people.

Characteristics of Healthy, Asset-Building Communities

Successful asset-building communities are those in which adults and youth work together to create a culture of cooperation rooted in respect for all community members. Here you'll find the characteristics of healthy asset-building communities. Note that there is and should be much overlap between the various roles and responsibilities identified below.

Educators, youth leaders, and faith community members can do the following:

- Build assets in youth by concentrating on
 - Building intergenerational relationships
 - Educating and supporting parents
 - Encouraging a constructive use of time
 - Focusing on values development
 - Emphasizing service to the community.

The focus is on both their own members and on the larger community.

²³ Adapted from *Uniting Communities for Youth: Mobilizing All Sectors to Create a Positive Future*, Peter L. Benson, Ph.D., Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 1995.

- Youth-serving professionals and volunteers (such as day-care providers, teachers, social workers, religious and community youth leaders, coaches, and mentors) receive training in asset building.
- Preschool, elementary, and secondary schools place a high priority on becoming caring environments for all students. Schools provide a challenging and engaging curriculum, offer opportunities for nurturing the values that community members consider critical, expand and strengthen out-of-school activities, and connect with parents to reinforce the importance of family attention to asset building.

Young people can do the following:

- Learn about the Developmental Assets and care about increasing them by promoting asset building actions for themselves and their peers.
- Ask for opportunities to lead, make decisions, and offer their knowledge and ideas to others. They are empowered to take on useful roles in community life.
- Actively participate in developing community programs and policies, rather than function as passive objects of adult programming.
- Engage frequently in service to other people, often partnering with adults. The community highly values the service-learning that comes from these experiences.
- Most 7- to 18-year-olds are involved in one or more clubs, teams, or other youth-serving organizations that make asset building central to their mission.
- Establish and sustain healthy relationships with younger children.

All caring adults, including parents, community residents, business people, elected representatives, and organization members can do the following:

- Create safe places for youth to meet and hang out.
- Assume personal responsibility for developing sustained, caring, intergenerational relationships with young people and building assets by taking the following concrete actions:
 - Listening carefully
 - Sharing respectful conversation
 - Enjoying their company and distinguishing them by name
 - Complimenting positive behaviors
 - Acknowledging youth when they're present
 - Involving youth in decision-making.
- Identify and share with youth a core set of common values and boundaries. Adults model and articulate these positive values and boundaries to young people.
- Believe in the importance of building Developmental Assets in youth. Communicate that message several times a year to all residents.
- Support families and adults (particularly parents) with community programs that teach and equip adults to make asset building a top priority.
- Invest in expanding and strengthening the community system of youth clubs, teams, and organizations.
- Elevate peer helping, mentoring, and service-learning programs, all of which intentionally build assets, to top priority within the community and expand them to reach a larger number of youth.

- Ensure that businesses that employ teenagers deliberately address the Support, Boundaries and Expectations, Positive Values, and Social Competencies assets in the workplace.
- Encourage employers to develop family-friendly policies in the workplace and provide processes for employees to build healthy relationships with youth.
- Train youth organizations and other service provider leaders and volunteers in asset-building strategies. Provide meaningful opportunities for youth to serve their communities and build citizenship and leadership skills.
- Move asset development and community-wide cooperation to the top of local government planning, policy, and funding priorities through policy-making, influence, training, and resource allocation.
- Consistently and repeatedly communicate a vision for healthy youth through local, regional, and national media (including print, radio, television, and Internet). Public relations efforts support local asset-building efforts. The media provide forums for sharing innovative actions taken by individuals and organizations.
- Take pride in and share with youth the community's cultural strengths and traditions, including:
 - Showing respect for elders and authority figures
 - Nurturing intergenerational relationships
 - Caring for others
 - Understanding the wisdom about "what matters."

Affirming these strengths represents an important dimension of cultural competence, in addition to knowledge and contact with cultures outside one's own.

- Offer frequent expressions of support to young people in informal public settings and in formal gathering places.
- Recognize and celebrate the innovative actions of asset-building individuals and systems. Youth professionals and volunteers experience a high status in the life of the community.
- Make a community-wide commitment to asset building that is long-term and includes all residents.
- Pay particular attention to helping girls develop and express assertiveness skills, personal control and skill mastery, and a healthy self-concept.
- Pay particular attention to helping boys develop and express compassion, caring, and a healthy self-concept.
- Ensure that there are safe sources of short-term childcare for families on weekends and weeknights.

Creating an Asset-Rich Community

There is no single "best model" or "right way" for launching and sustaining a community-wide asset-building initiative. However, certain dynamics appear to be essential. The movement requires a team—representing all the social systems and voices in the community, *including youth*—to gather information, plan, and take the lead in mobilizing the community's asset-building capacity.

We recommend these general strategies for getting started:

- **Establish long-term goals and perspective**—Use the information in this report to develop a shared community vision for increasing the asset base for all children and adolescents. Strive to increase the average number of assets to 31 or more. Reaching your target cannot be rushed or accomplished with a single idea or program. It will take long-term commitment, multiple and coordinated changes, and a passion for the vision that will sustain your efforts.
- **Educate and motivate**—Make it a priority to communicate the power of Developmental Assets to all community residents—including children and youth—on multiple occasions, using a variety of media.
- **Think “intergenerationally”**—Communities that are too segregated by generations must look for opportunities to connect old and young, adults and youth, teenagers and children. Acknowledge and celebrate the asset-building power of intergenerational relationships.
- **Expand the reach of family education**—Families are the key source of Developmental Assets. All parents and guardians need multiple opportunities to learn about, remember, and build Developmental Assets in youth. Agencies, schools, community education, religious institutions, the media, public health, and other community-based organizations must work together to provide these opportunities, with particular emphasis on promoting responsible parenting by fathers and mothers.
- **Support and expand current asset-building efforts**—Though they may not use the same vocabulary, many people, places, and programs already build assets in neighborhoods, schools, parks and recreation programs, religious institutions, and youth organizations. Recognizing, publicizing, and supporting asset-building efforts helps reinforce their commitment and inspires others to take similar action.
- **Strengthen socializing systems**—Though much asset building occurs in daily, informal interactions, neighborhoods, schools, religious institutions, youth organizations, and employers must also be intentional about asset building. Look for ways to make training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities available in these settings.
- **Empower youth to contribute**—Many young people feel devalued by adults. Most report that their community does not provide useful roles for them. In settings where youth are involved, make it a typical occurrence to ask for their ideas and advice, to make decisions with them, and to treat them as responsible, competent allies in all asset-building efforts.
- **Elevate the importance of service**—Make it the accepted practice for children and youth to serve others in caring and compassionate ways through youth organizations, families, neighborhoods, schools, and religious institutions. Service solidifies caring values and provides opportunities to build social competencies, empowerment, and positive identity assets. It becomes even more powerful (shaping learning, positive values, and competencies) when combined with reflection activities. A reasonable goal would be to ensure that all youth engage in acts of service many times a year from the ages of five to 20.
- **Provide places to grow**—Too many youth lack connection to the kinds of teams, clubs, organizations, and programs that provide safe and active places to develop asset strength. All citizens and leaders need to look for opportunities to expand choices for young people to gather safely. Parents and other caring adults must encourage and reward involvement.
- **Advocate for high-quality opportunities for young people**—Young people are the responsibility not just of their families but of the whole community. All citizens—whether they are parents or not—must demand, support, and allocate necessary resources for the highest quality schools, out-of-school

care, and other youth programs. Challenge individuals to contribute their time and talent as youth program volunteers. Encourage employers to provide incentives for volunteering on behalf of children and youth.

- **Start a public dialogue**—It can be a big job to build public consensus around shared community values and boundaries that relate to our hopes for young people and their future. Nevertheless, look for ways to pursue this dialogue. While cultural, religious, and political diversity adds richness to any discussion, every community and its people also share common values and boundaries that can be articulated and upheld. Beginning the conversation in neighborhoods and apartment buildings, congregations, community centers, and other grassroots settings not only leads everyone to a broader understanding of common values related to civic life, but it also supports the beginning of new relationships and connections on the personal level.

