



Subject: The Commitment to Learning Category of Developmental Assets

A love of learning will take them far

Education has improved immensely in the past 20 years. Today, more young people are taking high-level courses, fewer of them are dropping out, math and science scores are on the rise, and more students are entering college after high school. But that doesn't mean a commitment to learning happens naturally in all young people. Instilling this important trait involves a combination of values and skills that include the desire to succeed in school, a sense of the lasting importance of learning, and a belief in one's own ability. This commitment is strongly influenced by the school environment and relationships with family and peers. **Commitment to Learning** is one of eight asset categories that make up Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, the qualities, experiences, and relationships that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

Here are the facts

Research shows the more young people are committed to learning, the more likely they are to grow up healthy. Search Institute has identified five assets in the Commitment to Learning category crucial for helping young people: Achievement Motivation, School Engagement, Homework, Bonding to School, and Reading for Pleasure.

Tips for building these assets

By supporting young people and reminding them of the built-in rewards of learning, you can help them deepen their engagement in learning at school, at home, and in the community. Focus on young people individually to help meet distinct needs, styles, and preferences. Schools and youth programs often offer different options. And remember: Learning happens everywhere, not just in school.

Also try this

In your home and family: Encourage reading as a regular part of your child's day or read aloud together. When young people are read to, have book collections at home and limits on TV watching, they are more likely to read for pleasure and lifelong learning.

In your neighborhood and community: Be a role model. Show young people your enthusiasm for learning new skills and gathering information. Encourage and support young people in finding new things that get them excited about learning.

In your school or youth program: Bring in guests who have achieved their dreams. Invite the students and participants to interview them and learn firsthand about the commitment needed to succeed.

Want to know more about Search Institute's other seven asset categories or the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them? Visit www.search-institute.org/assets.

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Developmental Assets® are positive factors within young people, families, communities, schools, and other settings that research has found to be important in promoting the healthy development of young people. From *Instant Assets: 52 Short and Simple E-Mails for Sharing the Asset Message*. Copyright © 2007 by Search Institute®, 877-240-7251; www.search-institute.org. This message may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial uses only (with this copyright line). All rights reserved.

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