

Asset of the Month Project
La Plata Children, Youth and Family Master Plan (CYFMP) Community Partners

CYFMP will send out an asset each month with an essential question and tip of the day to community partners to insert in their organization's newsletters. This top section in black is an introduction with the monthly piece being in blue below.

"The Developmental Assets are 40 research-based, positive qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults. Based in youth development, resiliency, and prevention research, the Developmental Assets framework has proven to be effective and has become the most widely used approach to positive youth development in the United States and, increasingly, around the world." (<http://www.search-institute.org/>)

The Children, Youth and Family Master Plan (CYFMP) utilizes the Developmental Assets Survey as a periodic measure for how well our agencies and families are providing asset-rich supports, services and opportunities for La Plata County youth. The CYFMP also teaches our community about the assets and how to utilize them in program development, parenting and in our daily lives.

Please join our community partners in promoting the Assets framework, by placing the following "Asset of the Month" in your newsletters, communications and interactions with youth and families. For a full list of the 40 Assets go to: <http://www.search-institute.org/what-we-study/developmental-assets>

Developmental Asset of the Month:

Asset #9. Service to others – Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.

Essential Question: *How do I build bridges between youth and meaningful service opportunities?*

Tips to ensure youth have access to meaningful service opportunities:

For families

- At mealtimes, share your recent service experiences with your family. This discussion demonstrates that your family values service, enables you to role-model the importance of service to others, and opens a discussion about ways to help in the community.
- Have a family meeting to consider the idea of a family service project, and make sure that everyone participates regardless of their age. Have everyone list their volunteer activities to see if others are interested in helping, and talk about additional causes that each member would like to support.

For all adults

- Create youth-oriented volunteer opportunities that are diverse in the amount of time, energy, and expertise required. To make sure that youth get the most out of the experience, provide adequate training and make sure that the youth understand how their efforts will make a difference.
- When seeking volunteers, don't just reach out to the high-achieving youth in leadership programs. Young people from all backgrounds deserve the opportunity to experience the benefits of service.
- Be sure to affirm and recognize the efforts of all the youth who serve.

At school or in youth programs

- Service-learning programs that link educational or program objectives with opportunities to address real-world issues are a **proven strategy for increasing developmental assets**.
- Work with a group of youth to identify a list of causes that they care about (e.g., animals, education, environment, creating safe places for youth to hang out, health care, disaster relief, homelessness, peace, etc.) and identify ways that they can help. Help the youth research the need, define goals, create a plan (being sure to consider the potential needs and feelings of the recipients), and implement their service ideas. Be sure to guide the youth in reflecting on their experience at the end of the project.

Source: Project Cornerstone <http://www.projectcornerstone.org/>

Resources:

Service-Learning and Asset Building - resources include a free guide to service-learning in community-based organizations as well as fact sheets, resources, and links to information from national service-learning organizations. <http://www.search-institute.org/content/service-learning-and-asset-building>

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse - the Clearinghouse is the Nation's #1 library of service-learning resources. The Clearinghouse offers thousands of free online resources for K-12, higher education, community based organization, and tribal communities. <https://gsn.nylc.org/clearinghouse>

For more information about the CYFMP, contact Susan Hakanson, 382-6212 or susan.hakanson@co.laplata.co.us.