

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

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| <b>External Assets</b> | <b>Support</b>                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Family support</b>—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) provide the child with high levels of consistent and predictable love, physical care, and positive attention in ways that are responsive to the child’s individuality.</li> <li>2. <b>Positive family communication</b>—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) express themselves positively and respectfully, engaging young children in conversations that invite their input.</li> <li>3. <b>Other adult relationships</b>—With the family’s support, the child experiences consistent, caring relationships with adults outside the family.</li> <li>4. <b>Caring neighbors</b>—The child’s network of relationships includes neighbors who provide emotional support and a sense of belonging.</li> <li>5. <b>Caring climate in child-care and educational settings</b>—Caregivers and teachers create environments that are nurturing, accepting, encouraging, and secure.</li> <li>6. <b>Parent involvement in child care and education</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers together create a consistent and supportive approach to fostering the child’s successful growth.</li> </ol>                       |
|                        | <b>Empowerment</b>                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. <b>Community cherishes and values young children</b>—Children are welcomed and included throughout community life.</li> <li>8. <b>Children seen as resources</b>—The community demonstrates that children are valuable resources by investing in a child-rearing system of family support and high-quality activities and resources to meet children’s physical, social, and emotional needs.</li> <li>9. <b>Service to others</b>—The child has opportunities to perform simple but meaningful and caring actions for others.</li> <li>10. <b>Safety</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, teachers, neighbors, and the community take action to ensure children’s health and safety.</li> </ol>  |
|                        | <b>Boundaries &amp; Expectations</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <b>Family boundaries</b>—The family provides consistent supervision for the child and maintains reasonable guidelines for behavior that the child can understand and achieve.</li> <li>12. <b>Boundaries in child-care and educational settings</b>—Caregivers and educators use positive approaches to discipline and natural consequences to encourage self-regulation and acceptable behaviors.</li> <li>13. <b>Neighborhood boundaries</b>—Neighbors encourage the child in positive, acceptable behavior, as well as intervene in negative behavior, in a supportive, nonthreatening way.</li> <li>14. <b>Adult role models</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and other adults model self-control, social skills, engagement in learning, and healthy lifestyles.</li> <li>15. <b>Positive peer relationships</b>—Parent(s) and caregivers seek to provide opportunities for the child to interact positively with other children.</li> <li>16. <b>Positive expectations</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers encourage and support the child in behaving appropriately, undertaking challenging tasks, and performing activities to the best of her or his abilities.</li> </ol> |
|                        | <b>Constructive Use of Time</b>      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. <b>Play and creative activities</b>—The child has daily opportunities to play in ways that allow self-expression, physical activity, and interaction with others.</li> <li>18. <b>Out-of-home and community programs</b>—The child experiences well-designed programs led by competent, caring adults in well-maintained settings.</li> <li>19. <b>Religious community</b>—The child participates in age-appropriate religious activities and caring relationships that nurture her or his spiritual development.</li> <li>20. <b>Time at home</b>—The child spends most of her or his time at home participating in family activities and playing constructively, with parent(s) guiding TV and electronic game use.</li> </ol>   |

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| <b>Internal Assets</b> | <b>Commitment to Learning</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. <b>Motivation to mastery</b>—The child responds to new experiences with curiosity and energy, resulting in the pleasure of mastering new learning and skills.</li> <li>22. <b>Engagement in learning experiences</b>—The child fully participates in a variety of activities that offer opportunities for learning.</li> <li>23. <b>Home-program connection</b>—The child experiences security, consistency, and connections between home and out-of-home care programs and learning activities.</li> <li>24. <b>Bonding to programs</b>—The child forms meaningful connections with out-of-home care and educational programs.</li> <li>25. <b>Early literacy</b>—The child enjoys a variety of pre-reading activities, including adults reading to her or him daily, looking at and handling books, playing with a variety of media, and showing interest in pictures, letters, and numbers.</li> </ol>   |
|                        | <b>Positive Values</b>        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26. <b>Caring</b>—The child begins to show empathy, understanding, and awareness of others’ feelings.</li> <li>27. <b>Equality and social justice</b>—The child begins to show concern for people who are excluded from play and other activities or not treated fairly because they are different.</li> <li>28. <b>Integrity</b>—The child begins to express her or his views appropriately and to stand up for a growing sense of what is fair and right.</li> <li>29. <b>Honesty</b>—The child begins to understand the difference between truth and lies, and is truthful to the extent of her or his understanding.</li> <li>30. <b>Responsibility</b>—The child begins to follow through on simple tasks to take care of her- or himself and to help others.</li> <li>31. <b>Self-regulation</b>—The child increasingly can identify, regulate, and control her or his behaviors in healthy ways, using adult support constructively in particularly stressful situations.</li> </ol> |
|                        | <b>Social Competencies</b>    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32. <b>Planning and decision making</b>—The child begins to plan for the immediate future, choosing from among several options and trying to solve problems.</li> <li>33. <b>Interpersonal skills</b>—The child cooperates, shares, plays harmoniously, and comforts others in distress.</li> <li>34. <b>Cultural awareness and sensitivity</b>—The child begins to learn about her or his own cultural identity and to show acceptance of people who are racially, physically, culturally, or ethnically different from her or him.</li> <li>35. <b>Resistance skills</b>—The child begins to sense danger accurately, to seek help from trusted adults, and to resist pressure from peers to participate in unacceptable or risky behavior.</li> <li>36. <b>Peaceful conflict resolution</b>—The child begins to compromise and resolve conflicts without using physical aggression or hurtful language.</li> </ol>   |
|                        | <b>Positive Identity</b>      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37. <b>Personal power</b>—The child can make choices that give a sense of having some influence over things that happen in her or his life.</li> <li>38. <b>Self-esteem</b>—The child likes her- or himself and has a growing sense of being valued by others.</li> <li>39. <b>Sense of purpose</b>—The child anticipates new opportunities, experiences, and milestones in growing up.</li> <li>40. <b>Positive view of personal future</b>—The child finds the world interesting and enjoyable, and feels that he or she has a positive place in it.</li> </ol>   |