



WEEK #5

SEPTEMBER 27, 2010

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Young person spends one hour or more per week in religious activities.

The 40 developmental assets, as documented by Search Institute, are the essential building blocks that help all youth make positive choices, and grow into confident, responsible, healthy, and caring citizens. The *more* assets young people have, the *less* likely they are to engage in risky behaviors, and the *more* likely they are to succeed in school.

Studies by Search Institute show that youth who participate in religious activities at least one hour per week, have an average of five more assets than those who don't participate. Emerging research shows that in addition to engaging in religious activity, these young people experience many other assets as part of the faith community and their own faith commitment. As youth are recognized as gifts from God, congregations strive to nurture all areas of young persons' lives in addition to nurturing their faith.

What can you do to increase this Asset?

At home:

- Attend church as a family.
- Pray before your meals.
- Encourage your children and their friends to participate in religious activities.
- Volunteer as a family at your church (to read scripture, light the candles, help at the food pantry, teach a class, provide special music, mentor another family)

At school:

- Don't schedule school activities that conflict with important religious holidays, and be sure to consider the many different faiths and traditions in your school.

In your congregation:

- Pray for the youth in your church and in our community.
- Encourage youth leadership and input in the development of activities for youth. Listen to what youth say they want.
- Create a climate within your youth programming that is warm, friendly, welcoming, and accepting of all youth.

In your community:

- Include representatives from the faith community - wide task forces and committees.
- Partner with local congregations in sponsoring events for youth.

What youth can do:

- Pray for your friends and other youth in our community.
- Volunteer at your church.
- Participate in activities at your church or your friend's church.

From *What Kids Need to Succeed* by Peter Benson, Ph.D., Judy Gabraith, MA and Pamela Espeland.
Reference Developmental Asset #19

Learn about another Asset next week!

Do you have ideas on How To Build Assets? Need More Information? Contact:

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