



## **Developmental Assets**

### **There are 40... How many does your child have?**

#### **Asset #1 – Family Support**

Family support is the first of 40 Developmental Assets proven to help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible and avoid all sorts of social problems including substance abuse. That is why as a community we are working together with parents and other important people in children's lives to promote and build assets and asset development opportunities.

Family support is a good foundation – all young people need love, comfort, encouragement and help from their families. You can show the children in your family that you love and support them in many ways. When you hug them or say, "I love you", the sentiment is obvious. Paying attention to them, listening to them, and taking an interest in what they're doing are less noticeable ways of giving support. After all, does your child feel supported when you come home from an exhausting day, and he or she wants to talk - but you want a break. The young people closest to you know your body language. They listen to what you say – and don't say. They notice when your words and actions don't match. Make it a point to be sure they hear your message of love and support loud and clear at all times.

Here are some simple ideas for building family support:

- Find fun and free activities to do with your family.
- Find games that encourage interaction.
- Keep looking for new, fun games.
- Add new twists to old favorites.
- More hugs! Young people need to know you love them. (This is a perfect exchange because you get more hugs too!)
- Put at least one evening a week aside for family activities. Let the whole family brainstorm activities. Consider them all!
- Spend time with your children individually. Let them know that your time together is important to you.
- Children learn to love and support by example. Be loving towards yourself, your spouse/partner, and your pets.
- Eat at least one meal together a day.
- Make lunch bag/box love letters for the whole family.
- Do something healthy that you enjoy to refuel your Personal Support tank frequently – a bath, a nice walk, shoot hoops, read.