



Developmental Assets

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

Asset #26 – Caring

Teaching and showing children how to act in caring ways is essential not only during the holiday season but throughout the year. And, a family that values caring is one of 40 Developmental Assets proven to prevent substance use, early sexual activity, obesity and a variety of other social problems.

The holiday season is the perfect time to model caring about others in our community or the global community – for example, donating to Santa’s Anonymous; giving some new chew toys or walking dogs at the SPCA; inviting people who can’t be with their families over for a dinner or brunch; making holiday cards to deliver to people in extended care; taking a walk together in our winter wonderland. A great gift idea or loan from the library is a must-read book you can read together called “Ryan and Jimmy – And the Well in Africa That Brought Them Together” by Herb Shoveller. This is an amazing story about how one Canadian six year old, whose classroom assignment to demonstrate caring has truly changed the world. You can check out the website: www.ryanswell.ca.

Here are other ideas for building the Caring Asset:

- ❖ Be positive and loving with children – they will care for others the same way they are cared for.
- ❖ Set appropriate limits for how children behave. If a child hurts others tell them it is not okay and show them other ways to act.
- ❖ Respect a child’s belongings and teach children to respect their own and other’s belongings.
- ❖ Show children how to be gentle when caring for pets, babies and other people.
- ❖ As a family practice doing spontaneous acts of kindness.
- ❖ Choose a local or global charity; give children the opportunity to learn about it and understand how they are helping.
- ❖ When possible find ways for children to work directly with people who need care i.e. serving a meal at a community dinner verse food for it.