



## **Developmental Assets**

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

#### **Asset #32 Planning and Decision Making**

Decisions, decision! Whether you are planning a trip to the park, a beach, camping or visiting family in other parts of Alberta or Canada, summer is a great time for young people to learn and practice their planning and decision making skills. Research shows that young people who learn to make good decisions and plan ahead are better able to accomplish goals, do better in school, and are less likely to engage in drinking, smoking, or using other drugs. That is why Planning and Decision Making is one of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, the qualities, experiences, and relationships that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible.

Unfortunately, search research indicates that only about 29 percent of young people, ages 11 – 18, say they know how to plan ahead and make choices. Show young people different strategies to effectively plan ahead and make healthy decisions.

Here are some ideas for practicing good planning and decision making during your adventures this summer:

- Teach young people decision making steps and then allow them to decide upon a summer activity or trip.
- Rather than open ended questions, give young people a couple of choices and allow them to come to a consensus and choose. "Today, we can take a picnic to Lion's Park or the Beaver Boardwalk. Which would we like to do?"
- Work together to make up a trip itinerary, or create their own map, to plan the great things to see and healthy things to do along the way.
- Ask children to brainstorm a checklist of what will be needed for a camping or a road trip and then pack these items together.
- While you are on holidays, help your child plan a neighborhood block party and model some great planning skills.
- It is important to respect your child's decisions but sometimes this is not possible. Explain why. Be firm and kind.
- Allow room for mistakes, but avoid rescuing them from the consequences of their decisions/choices. Ask them what they learned!
- Celebrate progress and accomplishments in planning and decision making.