

Developmental Assets® In A Nation of Promise



New Asset and Resiliency Building
Technologies Promote
Developmental Assets

Developed at the Connecticut Assets Network
www.ctassets.org

This page left blank intentionally

Contents

I.	Promoting Developmental Assets in a Nation of Promise.....	5
II.	CCAMP: Community Connection Asset Mapping Process.....	5
III.	Asset Categories.....	6
	1. Support.....	6
	2. Empowerment.....	7
	3. Boundaries and Expectations.....	7
	4. Constructive Use of Time.....	8
	5. Commitment to Learning.....	9
	6. Positive Values.....	9
	7. Social Competencies.....	10
	8. Positive Identity.....	11
IV.	Summary.....	12
V.	Notes.....	13



This page left blank intentionally



Promoting Developmental Assets[®] in a Nation of Promise

“The major source of developmental supports is vested in our citizens and their capacity to develop sustained relationships with young people. Relationships are the major conduit through which flow the nurture of skills, the transmission of wisdom, the invitation to contribute and the encouragement to lead. Intentionality about delivering multiple supports is critical. And it may take some focused planning to ensure that all of your work with young people is aligned with a comprehensive understanding of developmental supports”.¹—Peter Benson, President, Search Institute[®]

Peter Benson challenges us to be more intentional about our developmental asset building to ensure that the youth in our care “discover an aspect of themselves, e.g., an interest, skill or capacity – the spark – that gives them joy and energy, and propels them toward exploration, expression”² and eventually, meaningful contribution to the community. The Connecticut Assets Network’s *Community Connection Asset Mapping Process[®] (CCAMP[®])³* helps *Healthy Community—Healthy Youth[®]* initiatives of every shape and size strategically provide youth with the developmental, educational and social supports to increase both competencies *and* thriving behaviors. CCAMP, a dynamic process for building social capital, natural social-support systems and asset mobilization, involves six steps:

- Step 1: A community team that facilitates planning, marketing and communications;
- Step 2: Surveys that guide conversations with youth (and/or other target populations);
- Step 3: A web-based resource-bank database that catalogues and manages information on “sparks”, needs and resources;
- Step 4: Powerful reporting systems that connect people to people and release capacities for support and mutually beneficial problem solving;
- Step 5: Evaluations that use stories to illustrate the results of these connections and the transformations that have been achieved;
- Step 6: Outcome based planning that uses reporting systems and GIS technology to track connections and follow results.

“We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that deep inside us something is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our touch, sacred to our touch. Once we believe in ourselves we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit.”—E.E. Cummings

Using CCAMP, groups can be more intentional in developing assets and thriving behaviors in each of Search Institute’s asset categories described below⁴. The following table illustrates how

ASSET TYPE	ASSET NAME AND DEFINITION	USING CCAMP TO OPERATIONALIZE THIS ASSET
<p>Support (External)</p>	<p>1. Family Support Family life provides high levels of love and support.</p>	<p>Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional in providing support for youth and families?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In families, schools and neighborhoods, CCAMP surveys initiate conversations that otherwise might never occur about those things that generate energy in youth, i.e., what they're most interested in that helps them thrive (sparks). • CCAMP's web-based database organizes and manages the information that has been gathered about youth's assets and interests. • CCAMP's powerful reporting systems allow community groups (Youth Service Bureaus, schools, etc.) to be more intentional about connecting youth to developmental, educational and social supports in the community. • In schools, classroom teachers survey students to connect youth with developmental, educational and social supports (people, places, things, opportunities and experiences) directly related to the student's interests and skills (spark). • Whole school surveying helps teachers at all grade levels to provide appropriate developmental and educational supports like mentoring, tutoring and other activities to both meet students' academic needs and create a caring school environment. • Schools survey or "map" adults in Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO's) or Associations and discover a wealth of opportunities for parental involvement by matching skills and interests to support classrooms, after school programs and extra curricular activities. • In the wider community, <i>Organizations On-line</i> provides information to create connections between individuals and other community resources that serve to help youth thrive. Resources are as unique as each community, but might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a retired dancer who is willing to teach students who want to learn hip hop dancing; • a sports store willing to donate equipment to youth or intergenerational teams; • church basements or senior citizens centers that can offer space to hold suppers or seminars and other intergenerational activities; • businesses or organizations interested in engaging students as interns around mutual interests and needs; • businesses or organizations interested in "adopting" or sponsoring a school or a grade level.
	<p>2. Positive Family Communication Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.</p>	
	<p>3. Other Adult Relationships Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.</p>	
	<p>4. Caring Neighborhood Young person experiences caring neighbors.</p>	
	<p>5. Caring School Climate School provides a caring, encouraging environment.</p>	
	<p>6. Parent Involvement in Schooling Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.</p>	

Empowerment (External)	7. Community Values Youth Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional in providing opportunities that empower youth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through CCAMP’s surveys and resource-bank database, Healthy Community initiatives can catalog and manage information about skills and interests to mobilize youth in meaningful activities as resources in the community. • Youth are empowered as social entrepreneurs when they create and manage new initiatives within their schools, neighborhoods, and faith communities based upon skills, mutual interests, needs and resources. • CCAMP’s powerful reporting process gives community groups the information they need about what energizes and engages youth to invite youth to the table (sitting on boards, task forces, etc.); there youth can influence how and where resources are used to further enhance community life. • CCAMP’s ‘making connections’ process directly engages youth (and others) in the development of their own life through choices, the allocation of resources, receiving support and learning to ‘give back’.
	8. Youth as Resources Young people are given useful roles in the community.	
	9. Service to Others Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	
	10. Safety Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	
Boundaries and Expectations (External)	11. Family Boundaries Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts.	Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional in providing boundaries and expectations for youth? <p>CCAMP’s contribution to the boundaries and expectations category will more likely be a result of how CCAMP operates in all other asset categories. It is the fruit of all other activities; the transformation we seek. Purposeful conversations are likely to lead to healthy relationships being built, and thriving behaviors developed and systematically supported.</p> <p>Using CCAMP to be intentional in operationalizing the 40 Developmental Assets in community life serves to create environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where people know people and are connected; • where lively formal and informal social networks support children and adults of all ages; • where youth, parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior; • that impact and set the <i>norm</i> or <i>expectations</i> of a neighborhood or school community; and • where <i>connectedness</i> is considered both an individual and environmental strategy for creating communities that care and are safe.
	12. School Boundaries School provides clear rules and consequences.	
	13. Neighborhood Boundaries Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people’s behavior.	
	14. Adult Role Models Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	

<p>Boundaries and Expectations (External)</p>	<p>15. Positive Peer Influence Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior.</p>	<p>CCAMP provides people with the tools to create climates where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual benefit is the order of the day, thriving behaviors are supported, and rules and boundaries are often arrived at cooperatively and “owned” by all participants. • Adults (parents, teachers, neighbors, storekeepers, etc.) benefit from the expertise youth share and increase their expectations that youth will contribute. • Youth increasingly have high/realistic expectations of adults because, rather than assume they know what children and youth want and need, adults actually ask youth and children directly, being intentional and systematic. <p>Both youth and adults, by building healthy relationships, get their real needs for respect and consideration met. In this environment it is much more likely that all individuals will thrive.</p>
	<p>16. High Expectations Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.</p>	
<p>Constructive Use of Time (External)</p>	<p>17. Creative Activities Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.</p>	<div data-bbox="727 800 1507 905" style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional in providing youth with opportunities to use time constructively?</i></p> </div> <p>When activities are founded upon mutual benefit, youth and adults are more likely to engage in community-based activities.⁵ Using CCAMP to survey the community, the actual interests and skills of individuals—those things that give them joy and energy—are considered right from the start. When community groups plan vital offerings around the stated interests of community members, we shift from incidental to intentional asset building to meet both individual and community needs.</p> <p>CCAMP creates more opportunities for constructive use of time as communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use CCAMP’s Individual Surveys to conduct conversations with youth about how they want to use their time to share or learn new skills; • Use CCAMP’s Organization Surveys to discover the many opportunities for matching youth (based on Individual Surveys) to formal and informal resources (people, places and things); • Catalogue and manage individual and organizational data in CCAMP’s resource-bank database; • Create a strategic plan with the purpose of connecting people with needs and interests to people with skills and resources; • Conduct outcome-based planning based on the connections made and the results of those connections. • Reflect on their results/outcomes, and create inspirational stories modeling how communities may foster increased constructive use of time among their target population.
	<p>18. Youth Programs Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.</p>	
	<p>19. Religious Community Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.</p>	
	<p>20. Time at Home Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.</p>	

Commitment to Learning (Internal)	21. Achievement Motivation Young person is motivated to do well in school.	Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about encouraging a commitment to learning in youth?
	22. School Engagement Young person is actively engaged in learning.	
	23. Homework Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	
	24. Bonding to School Young person cares about her or his school.	
	25. Reading for Pleasure Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	
Positive Values (Internal)	26. Caring Young person places high value on helping other people.	Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about fostering positive values in youth?
	27. Equality and Social Justice Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	

Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about encouraging a commitment to learning in youth?

A sense of connectedness is the greatest single factor or asset that contributes to a young person’s commitment to learning.⁶ With the *Community Connections Asset Mapping Process (CCAMP)* students become active co-creators of their school/community environments; thriving behaviors increase as does motivation to do well in school and community life.

1. Individual surveys map the assets and needs of students, engaging students in conversations where what gives meaning to their lives can be expressed and heard.
2. Organizational surveys map the assets and needs of community groups—what is the vision and mission of these groups, (i.e., why do they exist?) and in light of the organizations’ purpose, more effective school/community partnerships are established.
3. Using CCAMP reports for *strategic* planning, students actively partner with adults to ensure the interests and needs of all members of the (school) community are taken into account. The results are more successful:
 - tutoring and mentoring experiences;
 - sports and club involvement;
 - service learning,
 - bonding to school/improvement in school climate; and
 - clarity about norms and expectations regarding service

In summary, CCAMP provides tools (surveys, conversations, resource-bank database, powerful reports for connecting people to people, tracking systems) to intentionally create a sense of connectedness among students in schools and in the wider community, resulting in greater commitment to learning.

Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about fostering positive values in youth?

People model values.⁷ Acting on a simple belief that every person in one’s community is gifted, and every person in the community can contribute his/her gifts,⁸ CCAMP gives Healthy Community initiatives the tools and process to engage in the following model behaviors:

1. Youth have forthright conversations with adults and other youth (using the CCAMP individual survey) about skills and interests they can share to improve the quality of life for themselves and others;
2. By contributing to the CCAMP process (interviewing peers, entering data, contributing in planning meetings, etc.) a young person is expressing caring.

<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Values</p>	<p>28. Integrity Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.</p>	<p>3. Youth co-create activities with adults for connecting people to people (using the resource-bank database), increasing equality and social justice through inclusion in community life. Youth experience community as a place where all members can contribute their gifts and thrive.</p> <p>4. Youth work with adults to elicit information from institutions / associations / volunteer groups (using the organizations-online process) regarding how organizations might best contribute time, talent and other resources to meet community needs and improve the quality of community life.</p> <p>5. When the CCAMP team depends on youth members to fulfill their responsibilities as team members, young persons have a chance to step up and model integrity and responsibility.</p> <p>Using the tools and process of <i>Community Connections (CCAMP)</i> gives youth what they need to take personal responsibility for setting new norms and expectations for positive values.</p> <p>“A sense of <i>connectedness</i> is the single most powerful protective factor against all developmental risk factors.”⁹</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“We must be the change we wish to see in the world” (of our youth) -- Ghandi</i></p>
	<p>29. Honesty Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."</p>	
	<p>30. Responsibility Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.</p>	
	<p>31. Restraint Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Social Competencies (Internal)</p>	<p>32. Planning and Decision Making Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about fostering social competencies in youth?</div> <p>1. Planning and Decision Making, Interpersonal Competence, and Cultural Competence are all strengthened when youth are engaged side by side with adults on the CCAMP project and step into “adult” roles as team members.</p> <p>2. CCAMP’s database organizes and provides information on the community’s programs and training resources; accessibility to these resources by community groups is increased. Resources might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workshops intended to directly address planning, decision making, friendship skills, conflict resolution; • Instructors, mentors, speakers, etc.; • space and materials; • mini-grants and other funding, • employee-release community service hours, etc. <p>3. CCAMP’s reports (with GIS technology) allow for youth to be engaged with adults for strategic planning on youth-adult teams using local data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphically illustrating existing programs and services • Graphically illustrating gaps in services • Locating resources to address those gaps
	<p>33. Interpersonal Competence Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.</p>	
	<p>34. Cultural Competence Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.</p>	

Social Competencies (Internal)	<p>35. Resistance Skills Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing census-tract data, and • Providing communication technologies (including click-speed email, mail merge, phone access, electronic newsletters, etc.) to increase collaboration and the sharing of limited resources. <p>4. While agency resources can be used to provide formal developmental supports around social competencies, much education in “life skills” comes through CCAMP regarding informal experiential opportunities, working cooperatively with friends, neighbors, schoolmates and families to achieve common goals.</p> <p>5. CCAMP creates connections between formal and informal systems, and is uniquely designed to help communities make connections that serve to enhance human and social competencies—and thriving behaviors—for everyone.</p> <p>When people connect for mutual benefit in community settings, segregation by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability, etc., is reduced while empathy, sensitivity and friendships increase. The use of CCAMP increases the likelihood of greater community inclusion and social justice.</p>
	<p>36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.</p>	
Positive Identity (Internal)	<p>37. Personal Power Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <i>Examples of how CCAMP helps communities be intentional about fostering positive identity in youth?</i> </div> <p>The positive community change process embedded in CCAMP is a hands-on way for young people to develop a larger sense of purpose and positive view of their personal future, as they see positive change occurring around them through their work with CCAMP.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCAMP surveys act as conversation guides for youth to proactively help each other discover and express what gives their lives purpose, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what matters most to them; • what energizes them, i.e., what they love to do (discovering their ‘spark’); • what they <u>would</u> love to do if they had the support. 2. CCAMP gives youth the tools (surveys, conversations, resource-bank database, powerful reports for connecting people to people, tracking systems) to partner with adults: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-creating experiences, projects, and opportunities that validate their interests and encourage them to achieve their hopes and dreams; and • managing the discovery and use of limited resources to make a vital difference in their school, neighborhood or community life.
	<p>38. Self-Esteem Young person reports having a high self-esteem.</p>	
	<p>39. Sense of Purpose Young person reports that “my life has purpose.”</p>	
	<p>40. Positive View of Personal Future Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.</p>	

IN SUMMARY:

CCAMP, as a whole community initiative, can assist Healthy Community-Healthy Youth[®] initiatives to be more intentional and strategic about actively engaging youth as resources (YAR) in the asset building process in each of the eight asset categories. In Search Institute's *Thriving Youth Project*¹⁰, thriving is described as:

- Beyond “competence” to optimally successful development
- “active, engaged, and competent” person is fused with “receptive, nurturing, and supportive ecologies”
- Passion for and action to grow a self-identified interest, skill, or capacity—“spark”
- On path to hopeful future involving contribution to larger good beyond the self

Peter Benson's call to action comes alive through CCAMP's powerful community tools built to generate conversations and actions that engage youth proactively for growing self-identified interests, skills and capacities. Through CCAMP's strategies for supportive relationship building and community connections, everyone is included in the action of developing thriving behaviors.

For more information (about training, licensing, asset mapping, reporting data, etc.) in using CCAMP as a foundational support to your asset building initiative, contact Gregory Ryan, Executive Director (gryan@ctassets.org) or Cate Bourke, Community Specialist (cbourke@ctassets.org) at the Connecticut Assets Network.

“Thriving” =

Spark + Support + Opportunities

+ Youth Qualities + Youth Action...

--- → Meaning + Contribution

**On a Path towards a Hopeful future
involving contribution to larger good
beyond the self**

Notes:

¹ “Promoting Developmental Supports: A Nation at Risk” by Peter Benson. Youth Today. March 2007. Vol 16, No 3. Pg.18.

² “On a Path Toward Thriving” by Peter Benson. Youth Today. June 2006. Vol. 15, No. 6.

³ For more information on CCAMP, visit Community Connections at www.ctassets.org.

⁴ Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets which research tells us are the building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. The percentages of young people who report experiencing each asset were gathered from the administration of the *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey in 318 communities and 33 states. These 40 Developmental Assets[®] may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial uses only. Copyright © 1997, 2006 Search Institute, 615 First Avenue NE, Suite 125, Minneapolis, MN. 800-888-7828; All rights Reserved. More information about the Assets can be seen at: www.search-institute.org

⁵ A. In Danbury, Connecticut, when all funding for after school programs was cut at the neighborhood elementary school, parents and students took on the job of asset mapping the neighborhood. Now, utilizing the talents and skills of people and the resources of local organizations in the single square mile around the school, they boast not only after school programs for kids but Saturday programs and offerings for adults as well. In the process, they actually surveyed, (i.e., had conversations with) the youth to find out what they wanted/needed most.

B. In New Haven, Connecticut, the Neighborhood Cultural Development Initiative (NCD) used asset mapping to discover the artistic talents of local citizens within 5 neighborhoods along with the opportunities for connecting local talent with local art institutions who were able to provide art space for shops, demonstrations, housing and jobs. This created many civic and school-community partnerships along with hundreds more grassroots people participating in and connecting with the city’s annual Arts Festival.

⁶ The National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (Add Health Study) is a comprehensive school-based study of the health related behaviors of adolescents in the United States. Five monographs have been produced based on the Add Health Survey and focusing on connections that make a difference in the lives of young people developed in the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health at the University of Minnesota. The five monographs are: 1) *Reducing the Risk: Connections That Make A Difference in the Lives of Youth* (1998), 2) *Protecting Teens: Beyond Race, Ethnicity and Family Structure* (2000), 3) *Improving the Odds: The Untapped Power of Schools to Improve the Health of Teens* (2002), 4) *Mothers’ Influence on Teen Sex: Connections that Promote Postponing Sexual Intercourse* (2003), and 5) *Influencing Behavior: The Power of Protective Factors In Reducing Youth Violence* (2004). All monographs in this series can be downloaded from the website of the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health located at: www.allaboutkids.umn.edu/kdwbfvc/fr_pub.htm.

⁷ “We must be the change we wish to see in the world” [of our youth].—Gandhi

⁸ Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets. Kretzmann and McKnight. 1993. <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html>

⁹ The National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (Add Health Study) is a comprehensive school-based study of the health related behaviors of adolescents in the United States. **The first monograph, *Reducing the Risk: Connections That Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth* (1998)** presents the first research findings from *The Add Health Study*. It shows, among other things, that both the family and the school are powerful protective factors against all adolescent risk behavior (including tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use; suicidality; violence; early sexual debut and teen pregnancy) **to the extent that they provided connectedness.**

¹⁰ The *Thriving Youth Project* is an initiative of the Search Institute. Thriving is a new way to define and understand the dynamics of healthy development. The term “thriving” was initially used by Search Institute to demark a set of positive outcomes (e.g., academic success, caring for others and their communities, the affirmation of cultural and ethnic diversity, commitment to healthy lifestyles) to complement the litany of negative outcomes that, for decades, have dominated federal, state, and foundation approaches to documenting the health of U.S. teenagers. This initial foray into thriving indicators is intended to: (1) provide U.S. communities with a more balanced view of adolescents and their capabilities and contributions, and (2) provide programs and agencies with an alternative set of metrics for evaluating program success. For more information, go to: <http://www.search-institute.org/surveys/thrivingassessment.html>