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**NATIONAL STUDY REVEALS KEY FAMILY STRENGTHS WITH LINKS
TO CRITICAL OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES**

*While public debate focuses on family structure, study finds it
matters little for a family's level of strengths*

MINNEAPOLIS – June 6, 2012 – A groundbreaking national study released today by Search Institute shows how critical outcomes like academic performance, civic engagement and healthy lifestyles are directly linked to family strengths.

The American Family Assets Study creates a new portrait of America's families that focuses on family relationships, rather than family structure. It introduces a new, research-based framework of Family Assets made up of relationships, interactions, opportunities, and values that help families thrive. It is based on a survey conducted online by Harris Interactive in June 2011 of a broad, diverse cross-section of more than 1,500 families.

The study shows that families that have more Family Assets, also experience more positive outcomes for both the children and the parents in the family. Youth from families with higher levels of Family Assets tend to be more engaged in school, take better care of their own health, and show a greater willingness to act when they see others being treated unfairly. Similarly, parents from families with higher levels of Family Assets are more likely to care for their own health and to be active in their communities.

American families score an average of 47 out of 100 on an index of Family Assets, demographic differences matter little in a family's score. On average, the overall level of Family Assets does not differ much by parent education, single- vs. two-parent families, immigration status, parents' sexual orientation, or household income (though, regardless of income, assets do seem to differ by level of financial stress family members feel).

At the same time, there are slight differences by race/ethnicity and different types of communities. Black and Hispanic families have more assets than Whites, Asians and families of other races or ethnicities. And families living in urban communities have more assets than those in suburban or rural communities. In general, though, the study highlights that there are more similarities than differences across demographic groups.

“In the midst of a great deal of debate about the state and structure of families, this study focuses on factors within families that really make a difference,” said Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Acting President and CEO of Search Institute. “Our research clearly shows that all kinds of families can be stronger by paying attention to how they build strong relationships, set routines and expectations, deal with challenges in healthy ways, and develop deep connections to their communities. Supporting families in building these strengths will go a long way in addressing major challenges we face as a nation.”

This landmark study blends the perspectives of youth ages 10 to 15 and their parenting adults to show how a wide range of diverse families experience both strengths and gaps in Family Assets.

American families show the most strength in the category of “nurturing relationships” and the greatest needs in the categories of “establishing routines,” “adapting to challenges,” and “connecting to community.” The most common Family Asset is “clear expectations” (84%); the least common Family Asset is “relationships with others” in the community (22%).

About the Study

The survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of the Search Institute from June 6 – 23, 2011 among 1,511 parenting adults (U.S. residents, ages 18 years or older with a 10-15 year old child in the household) and their 10-15 year old child. Data were weighted to reflect the U.S. population of 10- to 15-year olds and their parents.

The study was conducted by Minneapolis-based Search Institute, a global leader in discovering what kids need to succeed in their families and communities, as part of its ParentFurther initiative (www.ParentFurther.com), which supports families in taking everyday steps to raise successful kids.

About Search Institute

For more than 50 years, Search Institute® has been a global leader in discovering what kids need to succeed. Through surveys of more than 3.5 million children and youth, 150+ books and other resources, and collaboration with schools and youth-serving organizations, Search Institute helps solve critical challenges in the lives of young people. The organization’s 40 Developmental Assets® are the most widely recognized approach to positive youth development in North America.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world’s leading custom research firms, leveraging research, technology and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries and serves clients in over 215 countries and territories.