



Building the Empowerment Assets

All young people need to be empowered. In other words, they need to feel valued and valuable. Here are ideas on how to build the four Empowerment assets for children and youth at different ages:

Ages Birth to 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realize that babies don't manipulate adults; respond immediately to their cries and needs.• Prop up babies and hold them so they can see more.
Ages 1 to 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure safety by childproofing all environments where children play. If you're not sure what to do, ask your doctor, day-care provider, or early childhood educator.• Start introducing the value of community service by having children do simple tasks at home, such as putting a toy away in a toy box or picking up socks.
Ages 3 to 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow children to make simple choices, such as wearing a black shirt or a red shirt.• Teach children basic safety rules, such as never touching poisons and always wearing safety belts in the car.• Do simple acts of community service together with children such as collecting food for a food bank.
Ages 6 to 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage children to write letters to the editor of your local paper about issues that are important to them.• Ask children what they like and do not like about their daily routines. Make changes to improve them.
Ages 12 to 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage young people to volunteer at least one hour a week. Talk with them about what they learn from these experiences.• Talk with young people about their feelings and fears about safety. Work together to help young people feel more safe.
Ages 16 to 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help teenagers spend time contributing to their communities. This could range from finding out about opportunities and how to get involved to simply figuring out ways to get them there.• Encourage teenagers to take leadership roles in addressing issues that concern them.