



Asset-Building Ideas for School Support Staff

Support staff—administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, teaching assistants, and others—are key to the climate in a school. They have daily interactions with students and they can sometimes focus on building relationships with young people in ways that teachers and administrators cannot. Thus, school support staff have lots of asset-building potential. Here are ideas on how support staff can build assets:

- **Post the list of assets** in your work area or office.
- **Learn about the assets and talk about them** with others. Speak well of students, and speak warmly to them.
- **Do at least one thing each day to intentionally build assets.**
- **Ask your supervisor if you can attend professional development opportunities** related to asset building.
- **View interruptions by students as your most important work.** It may not always be efficient, but taking the time to talk with and help students will make your school a better place.
- **See yourself and your colleagues as part of a web of support for young people.** Be flexible with time and duties so that students feel comfortable approaching you for help, advice, or other kinds of support.
- **View your activities within the asset framework.** If you are supervising the study skills laboratory, for example, help students develop the Commitment-to-Learning assets (21–25).
- **When supervising the hallways or lunch area, focus on positive values.** If students cut in line, remind them of the importance of being a role model (15), being honest (29), and having integrity (28) as you uphold school boundaries (12).
- **Show genuine enthusiasm for a job that allows you to work closely with and for young people.** If you don't like your job, talk to your supervisor or a trusted colleague about what you can do to make it better.
- **Laugh a lot.** While anyone can complain, it takes a creative person to rescue difficult situations with humor.
- **Notice what's working.** Tell a student directly when he or she did something right. Send a note to a teacher when he or she did something you admired.
- **Greet students** by name.
- **Attend student activities** and tournaments.
- **Get involved with other organizations that build assets** in children and youth.
- **Send notes to young people commending their efforts** as well as their successes.
- **Call parents with news of positive and helpful behavior** you see in their children.
- **Compliment young people on even the smallest positive behavior**, such as picking up another student's book when it fell or smiling at someone.
- **When participating in or observing a student activity (such as track or band), take pictures.** Get double prints and give the students the second copy.