Search Institute's 40 Assets & WEB

How WEB Aligns with The Search Institute's Framework for 40 Developmental Assets

From the Search Institute:

Researchers have learned a great deal in the past several decades about elements in human experience that have long-term, positive consequences for young people. Factors such as family dynamics, support from community adults, school effectiveness, peer influence, values development, and social skills have all been identified as contributing to healthy development. However, these different areas of study are typically disconnected from each other.

The framework of Developmental Assets steps back to look at the whole—to pull many pieces together into a comprehensive vision of what young people need to thrive. In addition to roots in the scientific research on adolescent development, the assets grow out of three types of applied research:

- *"Positive youth development," which highlights core processes and dynamics in human development that are foundational for growing up healthy.*
- *Prevention, which focuses on protective factors that inhibit high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse, violence, sexual intercourse, and dropping out of school.*
- *Resiliency, which identifies factors that increase young people's ability to rebound in the face of adversity, from poverty to drug-abusing parents to dangerous neighborhoods.*

The **WEB Program** supports and develops the following 22 Developmental Assets for Adolescents.

Support

3. Other Adult Relationships: WEB provides the opportunity for the trained coordinators (usually 3-5 adults) as well as adult volunteers to interact with both sixth graders and leaders and develop positive relationships at the school.

5. Caring School Climate: The secondary goal of WEB, following its primary focus of transitioning sixth graders, is to contribute to the overall positive school climate. Because the WEB Leaders are selected from a cross section of eighth grade students, the positive experience trickles out to the many social groups around the school.

Empowerment

7. Community Values Youth: WEB is a student-run, student-lead program. The goal is for the adult coordinators to simply provide the structure and the guidance for the WEB Leaders to positively influence both sixth graders as well as the rest of the school population. Adults recognize the value in their leaders because it would be literally impossible to run WEB without student leaders.

8. Youth as Resources: Ultimately, the strength of the program lies in the strength of the student leaders. The adult coordinators provide the structure for the students to lead. Students are the only renewable resource that schools have. No matter what, a school will have students.

9. Service to Others: Unless a school sets up an extrinsic reward system, WEB is solely a service to others program and if done well, requires a minimum of an hour a week commitment to the success of the program.

10. Safety: WEB contributes to the overall feeling of safety at school as it eliminates any hazing and harassment as well as diminishes the sense of anonymity which contributes to the increase of personal connection which in turns heightens personal safety.

Boundaries and Expectations

14. Adult Role Models: WEB coordinators provide positive, responsible behavior modeling for both the WEB Leaders as well as the entire sixth grade class by investing their time and energy for the success of all students.

15. Positive Peer Influence: Because the WEB Leaders are selected from a cross section of eighth grade students, the positive experience trickles out to the many social groups around the school.

16. High Expectations: From the moment a student walks into sixth grade orientation, he/she is expected not only by the adults, but by older peers to do well and contribute to the overall success of the school, as well as take responsibility for his/her own development.

Constructive Use of Time

18. Youth Programs: WEB provides a place for students to spend time and support others.

Commitment to Learning

21. Achievement Motivation: Data shows that if a student feels a personal connection to school, he/she will be more successful. WEB provides the structure for that personal connection with older peers as well as equal peers.

24. Bonding to School: Connection to school begins with personal connection and then grows from there. WEB provides a personal connection for each and every sixth grader and new student as they enter the school and then, continues support throughout the year.

Positive Values

26. Caring: WEB Leaders are asked to care for all incoming sixth graders for the entire year, supporting their academic, personal and social needs.

28. Integrity: WEB Leaders are encouraged to stand up for their beliefs in creating a community of care within the school.

30. Responsibility: Each WEB Leader is responsible for the support of 10 incoming sixth graders and their academic, personal and social success at school.

Social Competencies

32. Planning and Decision Making: Curricular lessons taught by WEB Leaders to sixth graders include how to plan and make positive decisions.

33. Interpersonal Competence: WEB Leaders develop empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills in interacting with and supporting sixth graders; in turn, they are role models for the sixth graders in developing these same skills.

34. Cultural Competence: Lessons taught by WEB Leaders to sixth graders include how to understand different perspectives in regards to race/culture/ethnic backgrounds. Also, students are randomly grouped for the orientation and throughout the year, resulting in heterogeneous grouping and interaction.

35. Resistance Skills: Lessons taught by WEB Leaders to sixth graders include how to interact with peer pressure and the importance of understanding personal boundaries and values.

36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution: WEB Leaders provide the structure for sixth graders to resolve conflict positively.

Positive Identity

39. Sense of Purpose: For the WEB Leaders, being responsible for others' wellbeing and success provides a purpose beyond the academic demands of school; for the sixth graders, knowing that an older peer cares for their success provides a belief that their life has purpose as well.

40. Positive View of Personal Future: With WEB providing ongoing support and the structure for students to care for one another, it gives hope for all involved that the future provides the best for each individual.