



Asset of the Month

January Asset Category: Positive Identity (Internal Asset)

January Asset: #39 Sense of Purpose

In a healthy community a young person is optimistic about his or her future.
(57% of youth surveyed believe they have this asset in their lives).

What is positive identity? Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise. The positive-identity assets tie in closely with the support assets. Young people who feel loved, supported, and nurtured are more apt to feel good about themselves and have a positive view of their future. Children and youth who have families, neighbors, friends, educators, and community residents who see the best in them are more likely to bring out the best in themselves and in those around them.

Parenting Tips & How-to-live the Asset of the Month: Sense of Purpose

All Children

- Be in touch with what's important to you. Share this with the children in your life.
- Examine your list of dreams and goals. What have you always wanted to do that you haven't tried yet? Trying to reach your goals tells children that you believe it's important to follow your interests.
- Inspire hope by being hopeful, interest by being interested. Let children see that you're enthusiastic about life; talk about your feelings with children.

Birth to age 5

- Find ways for infants to be around people who enjoy what they do. Let them enjoy a charged atmosphere where people are following their dreams.
- Let older infants choose what they want to play with. Give them as much time as they need to explore the toy they pick. As they learn what interests them, they take the first steps toward developing a sense of purpose.
- Toddlers and preschoolers have some activities they especially enjoy, but continue to give them many choices of things to do. Something yet undiscovered may someday become a favorite.
- Playing dress-up is a fun way for preschoolers to try out different roles. Ask children what they like about being a doctor, firefighter, or clown.

Ages 6 - 11

- Go out of your way to help children follow their passions. Point out to them her or his special talents, abilities, and strengths.
- Collect inspiring quotations. Hang them on bathroom mirrors, doors, refrigerators, and hallway walls. Have children collect and post their favorite sayings, too.
- Ask children to list the things they enjoy doing. Then have them rank these activities. How can they find more ways to do the top things on their list?
- Help children seek out answers and solutions when they face difficult times.

Ages 12 - 17

- Avoid comparing young people with other young people.
- Support teenagers as they explore and struggle with issues of meaning, purpose, and vocation. Think with them about schooling after high school, career choices, life relationships, and values.
- Teens:
 - Brainstorm a list of reasons to get up in the morning. Include simple pleasures (to feel the sun on your face, to see a friend) and more purposeful reasons (to learn something new, to work toward a goal).
 - Limit the hours you spend watching TV, playing video games, surfing the Net, or talking on the phone. Use that time to develop and pursue other interests.
 - Don't let anyone or anything distract you from your purpose. Be open to unique purposes.
 - If you have to do a school project on a historical person – study people with purpose; read biographies of notable people from the past and present.

- Don't wait for a purpose to come to you. Do something positive for another person or many people. See assets: 9, 26, 27.

* Visit <http://www.familyresourcesheboygan.org>. Learn more about Sense of Purpose and the other 39 assets. This website also lists other great websites for parents, youth group leaders, teachers, etc. with tools, handouts, etc.

January HCHY Events/Announcements

We are lining up trainings and presentations – please contact Erik Wagner (892-6706) or Mike Burns (451-8000) to reserve a training or presentation for your youth group, parent group, service club, students, staff, etc –**there is no cost for trainings/presentations and the time spent will be well worth it.**

***Please forward this information to co-workers, clients, families, and other contacts.**

*Please respond with feedback, ideas for upcoming assets of the month, etc., or if your organization would like to be listed as a resource to: ysports@sheboygancountymca.org or erikfrc@excel.net .

***Next Month's (February) Asset of the Month:** #16 High Expectations. Category: Boundaries and Expectations.

Sponsor: Van Horn Automotive Group

The Asset of the Month campaign is an effort under the Healthy Community/ Healthy Youth Initiative:

