

Developmental Assets and Youth:

How libraries can give teens the tools they need to succeed!

OLA SuperConference 2007

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Session #1416

Developmental Assets & Youth

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Overview

- Principles of Youth Development
- Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets
- How libraries relate
- Building Blocks
 - Examples from   
- Opportunities and Challenges
- Summary and Questions

**It takes a whole
village to raise a Child**
(African proverb)



Why Youth Development?

- Community building is about people from the community, government and business taking the steps to find solutions to issues within their communities.
- Public libraries can make a major contribution to the quality of life for all children and young adults.
- Building better communities means building healthy youth!

What is Positive Youth Development?

- A sense of competence: being able to do something well
- A sense of usefulness: having something to contribute
- A sense of belonging: being part of a community
- A sense of power: having control over one's future

Who can make a difference?

- Policymakers
- Neighborhood leaders and community members
- Business leaders
- Youth service organizations
- Media
- And yes- Libraries!!



40 Developmental Assets

- Concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people.
- The average young person surveyed in the United States experiences only 19 of the 40 assets. Overall, 59% of young people surveyed have 20 or fewer of the 40 assets.

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40 Developmental Assets™

Search Institute™ has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



Category	Asset Name and Definition	
External Assets	Support 1. Family Support -Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication -Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships -Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood -Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate -School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling -Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	
	Empowerment 7. Community Values Youth -Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources -Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others -Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety -Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	
	Boundaries & Expectations 11. Family Boundaries -Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries -School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries -Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models -Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence -Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations -Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	
	Constructive Use of Time 17. Creative Activities -Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs -Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community -Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home -Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	
	Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning 21. Achievement Motivation -Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement -Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework -Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School -Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure -Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
		Positive Values 26. Caring -Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice -Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity -Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty -Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility -Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint -Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
		Social Competencies 32. Planning and Decision Making -Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence -Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence -Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills -Young person can resist negative peer pressure. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution -Young person seeks to resolve conflicts peacefully.
		Positive Identity 37. Personal Power -Young person feels he or she has control over his or her life. 38. Self-Esteem -Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose -Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future -Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

www.search-institute.org

Internal Assets

- **Commitment to learning**
- **Positive values**
- **Social competencies**
- **Positive identity**



Library Implications

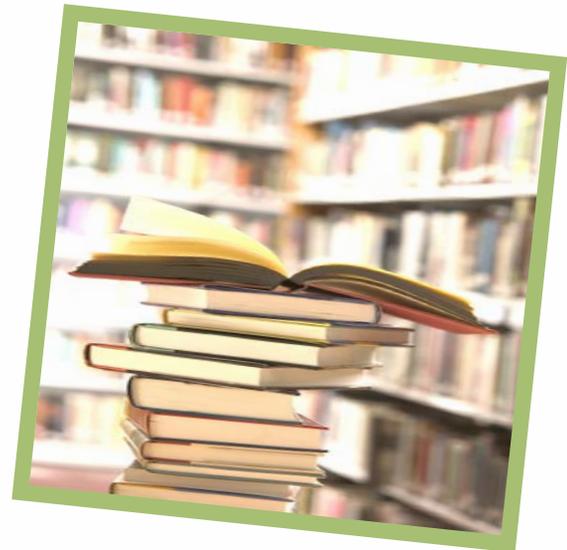


- Show that learning can be fun and not just for school.
- Provide an environment for caring, self-acceptance, and acceptance of differences in others.
- Encourage socially acceptable behavior, listening to others; opinions, developing one's own value system.
- Demonstrate that an individual can contribute to the community through meaningful volunteer work.

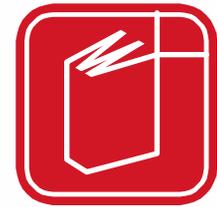
Bolan, K., Library Consultant and author of *Teen Spaces: The Step-by-step Library Makeover* (ALA Editions ,2003)

External Assets

- **Support**
- **Empowerment**
- **Boundaries and expectations**
- **Constructive use of time**



Library Implications



- **Provide an atmosphere** of both physical safety and support (libraries as safe havens).
- **Empower with opportunities** for youth involvement, show youth they can make a difference- influencing collections, programs and policies.
- **Set acceptable limits** of behavior within a standardized patron behavior policy that does not reflect ageism.
- **Offer programs that will engage** youth in a productive activity or a recreational outlet; collaborative efforts between community groups, families and schools.

Bolan, K., Library Consultant and author of Teen Spaces: The Step-by-step Library Makeover(ALA Editions ,2003)

How assets can make a difference

- Increase sense of self worth
- Learn to respect people and things
- Learn and perfect new skills
- Stay focused on and motivated by goals
- Forge a connection to a community or group
- Build an identity based on beliefs and experiences
- Form positive relationships
- Learn responsibility to self and community
- Acquire autonomy and accountability in decision-making



Based on A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in Nonschool Hours, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992

Libraries are ideal places for youth programs because they combine three fundamental elements for healthy youth development:

- varied, substantial intellectual resources;
- a positive peer environment;
- caring adults who can make a difference in young people's lives.



Libraries can deliver this empowerment by:

- Making a sustainable financial commitment to youth
- Involve Youth in our discussions
- Improve access
- Form partnerships
- Reach out
- Train our staff
- Develop youth programs
- Commit to connecting



4 Things libraries can do to build assets

- Present the asset-building concept to employees, constituents, or members in newsletters, workshops, and other forums. Share practical ideas for how they can build assets.
- Highlight, develop, expand, or support programs designed to build assets, such as mentoring, peer helping, service-learning, or parent education.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute to others in and through your organization.
- Use organizational newsletters, press releases, or events to recognize employees, constituents, or members who make special efforts to build assets for children and adolescents in the community.

How libraries relate



- Strategic Priority – formalize it as part of your strategic goals and plans
- Community Development & partnerships
- Business Plan
- **Always** relate what you are doing to youth development

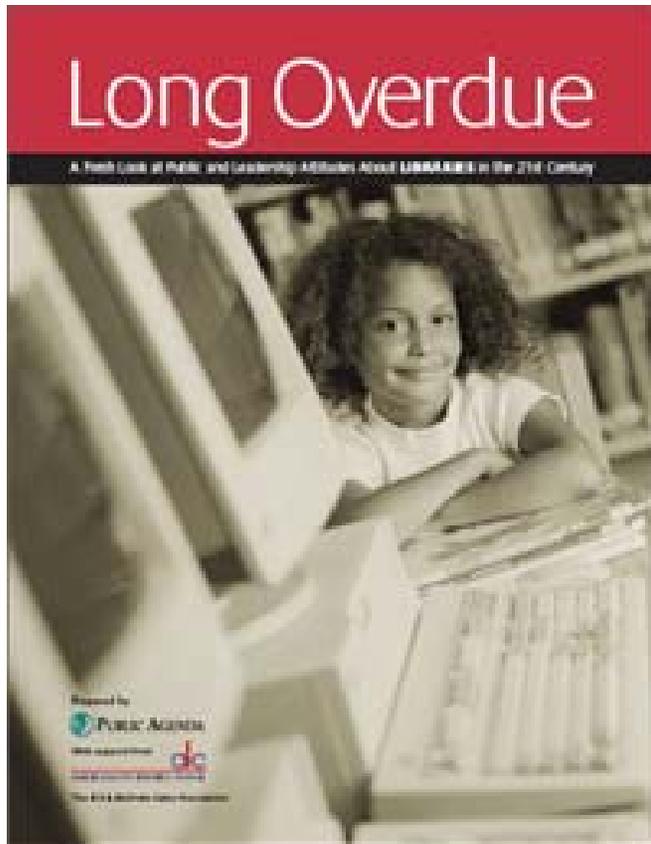
Question



How can the library design programs & services to help raise successful youth within our communities?

...use the "40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents" as a guide when developing your library's Youth Services Plan

Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century



"In this survey of the public, we find Americans prize public library service and see libraries as potential solutions to many communities' most pressing problems, from universal access to computers to the need for better options for keeping teens safe and productive."

- Prepared with support from the [Americans for Libraries Council](#) and funding from the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#).
- Full Report available: http://www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=99

Long Overdue

LEARNING IN MOTION: A Sampling of Library Teen Programs



Communities need safe and appealing places for teens to gather. What are the alternatives to the local mall or street corner? In a growing number of communities, public libraries have come to the rescue. Today's libraries offer teens everything from welcoming spaces to hang out, to programs and resources to build critical 21st century skills.

Key Fact:

Participation in library programs for kids under 18 has been rising steadily over the past decade, from 35.5 million/year in 1993, to 51.8 million/year in 2001.

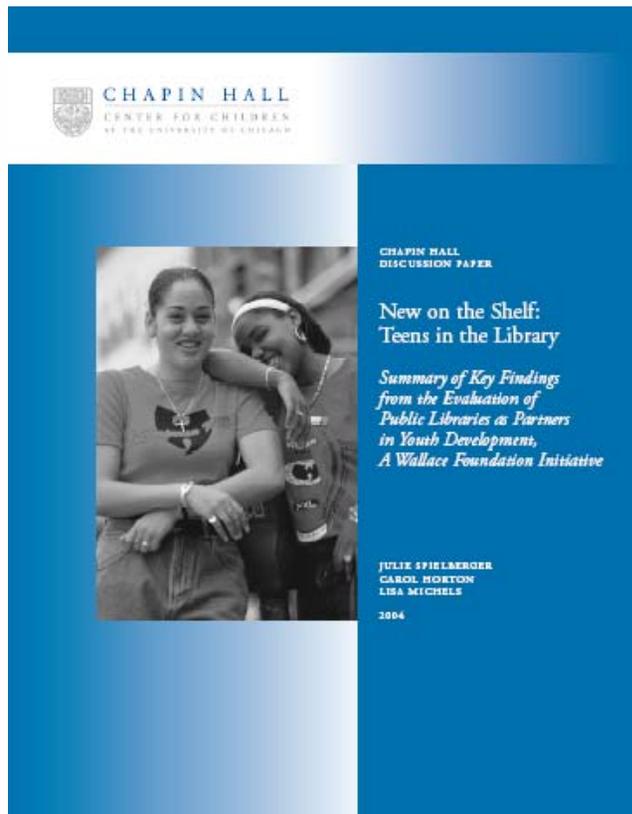
From *Public Libraries in the United States*, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003

Public Opinion:

Three-quarters of Americans believe it is a high priority for local public libraries to offer a safe place where teenagers can study and congregate.

From *Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century*, Public Agenda, June 2006

New on the Shelf: Teens in the Library



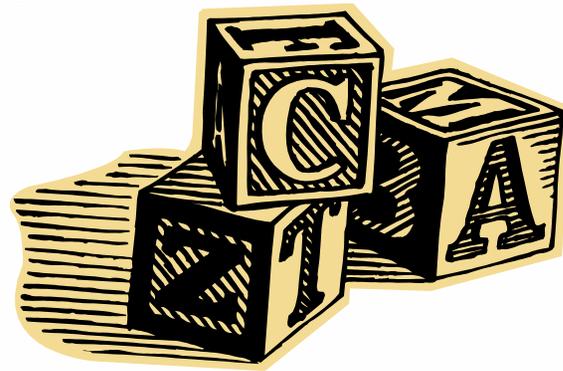
More and more teenagers have been visiting public libraries because they are safe, comfortable, and affordable places to do homework, use computers, and socialize after school. In turn, parents, communities, and policymakers increasingly view public libraries as part of a network of supports for youth that includes schools, churches, parks and recreation centers, museums, and youth-serving organizations.

Prepared by: Chapin Hall Centre for Children at University of Chicago

Full Report Available:
www.wallacefoundation.org

5 Building Blocks

- Programming
- Outreach & Partnerships
- Volunteerism
- Creative Expression
- Networking



1. Programming

- Literacy Based:
 - Book Clubs
 - Forest of Reading
 - Summer Reading



Teen Book Clubs

Search All for Enter Search Terms Go >>> Advanced Search

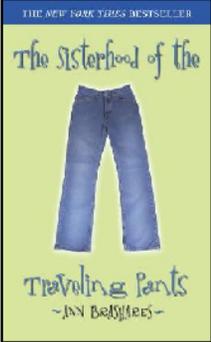
Hamilton Public Library Teen Online Bookclub
Home

Home Help

Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants by Ann Brashares

I want to...

- Get some help in using the discussion space
- Place a hold on the next book Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants



Carmen got the jeans at a thrift shop. They didn't look all that great and on the night before she and her friends part for the summer, Carmen almost tosses them. But Tibby says they're great and all four friends try them on. Nobody knows why, but the pants fit everyone perfectly. They decide that very night to form the Sisterhood, and take the vow of The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants . . . the next morning, they say goodbye. And now the journey of the pants—and the summer of their lives—begins.

Discussion please

Subject	Replies	Posted By	Modified
Friendship NEW	1	Lita Barrie	10/1/2006 10:17 AM



Forest of Reading





Teen Summer Reading



Programming continued

- Creative programming
 - Teen Toastmasters
 - Anime Programs
 - Anime Films
 - Art Contest
 - Craft Programs
 - Duct Tape Crafts
 - Get Crafty
 - Santa Claus Parade



2. Outreach & Partnerships



- Class visits – eg: Youth Online, Partners in Learning
- Participate in exhibits, fairs, community events, Youth Week
- Build relationships with school boards, YMCA, youth serving groups
- Connect with community partners

3. Volunteerism and Youth Engagement

- Teen Advisory Groups
- Homework programs
- Reading Buddies
- Programming Assistants
- Special Events



4. Creative Expression

- Poetry, photography and poster contests
- Writing, cartooning and comics workshops and clubs



Writing Contests – Power of the Pen, Take Flight & Write, Write2Xpress

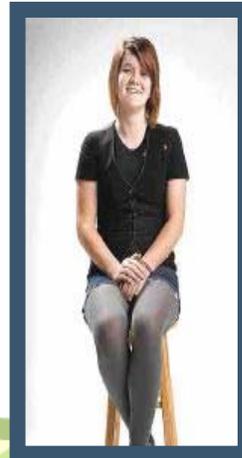


Potassium - Jillian Wyman
1st Place Short Fiction, Age 17

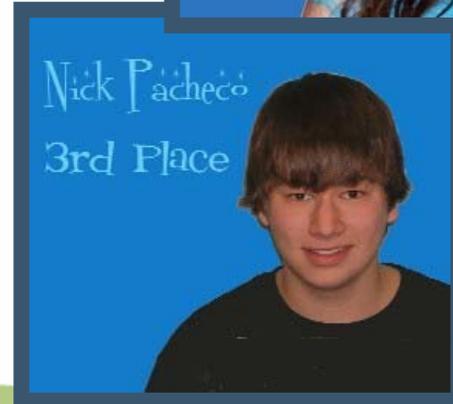
Maitland Banting Silver Quill Award

She stepped off the carriage, pulled the wood wheelchair out, and rolled it beside the left rear passenger seat. She opened the door and tugged on the person inside. She roughly placed him in the seat of the wheelchair. He didn't move. Couldn't move. Braving the attacking rain, she added a package, wheeled the load carefully in the dark to the end of the path and then dumped her dead husband over the cliff.

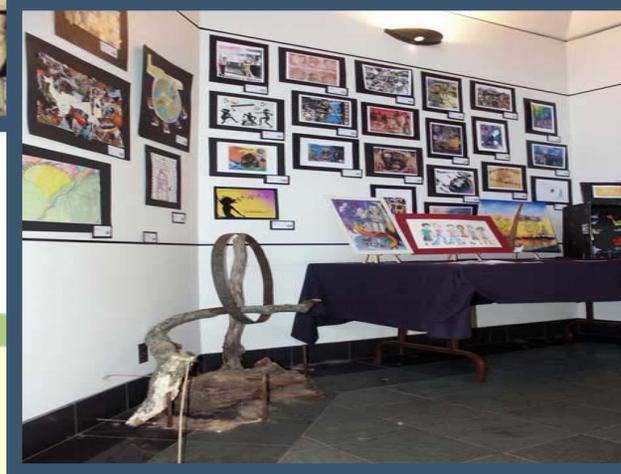
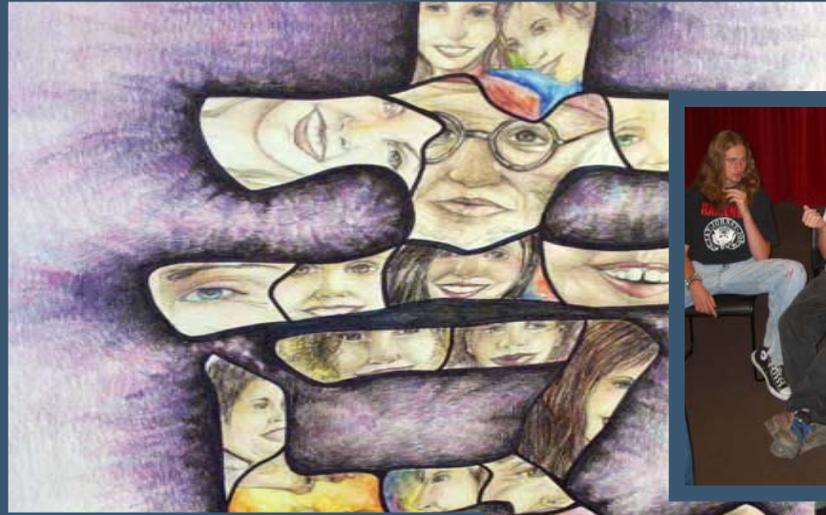
"That's the last time you'll betray me," she muttered.



Teen Open Mic & Teen Idol



Teen Art Exhibitions



5. Networking



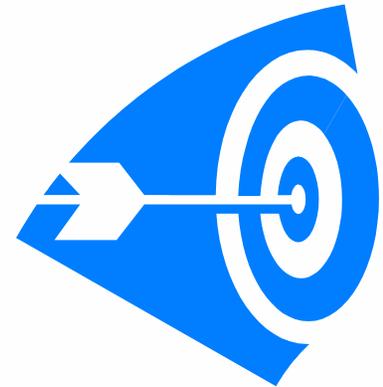
- Best Practices
- Copying is the highest form of flattery
- It takes time to build relationships and trust





Opportunities & Challenges

- Money, money, money!
- Staffing, staffing, staffing!
- Administrative support
- Board support
- Staff buy-in
- Relationship building takes time
- Community partners willingness



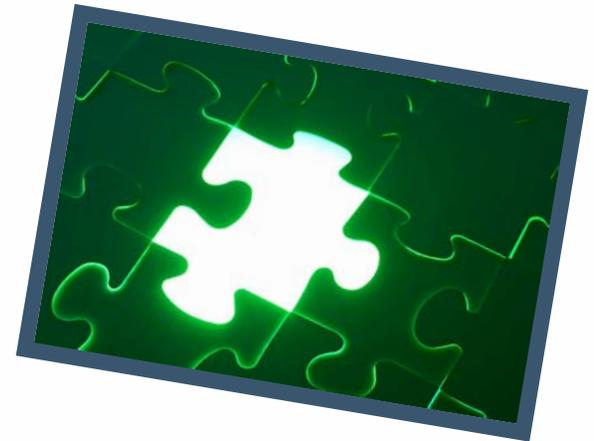
Getting the message out

- Word of mouth
- Online
- Small Steps



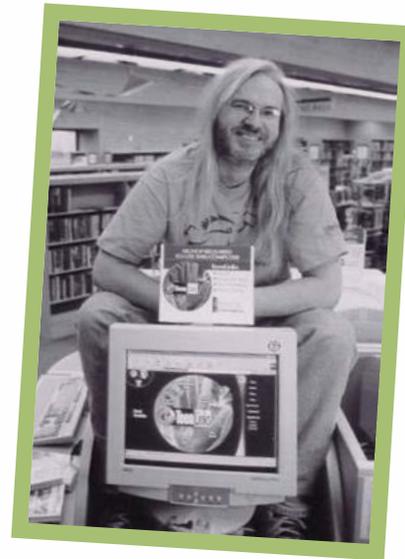
What can I do?

- Staff development- create Youth Advocates
- Patrick Jones, Moments of Truth
- Respect
- Positive patron connections
- Mentoring



“When we form relationships, we help kids succeed, but we also help libraries thrive.”

Patrick Jones SLJ Nov. 2001



It's your turn!



Pick one idea that works for you and
your library.

...and finally

Questions?



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Find out more....

- Connecting YA...Patrick Jones et al.
www.connectingya.com
- Walters, Virginia, et al. *Teens and Libraries: Getting it right*, 2003.
- Search Institute – www.search-institute.org
- Americans for Libraries Council, *Long Overdue* -
http://www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=99
- Chapin Hall Centre for Children at University of Chicago, *New on the Shelf* -
www.wallacefoundation.org