



What can you do?

Become part of Children First through simple, intentional actions or by becoming part of the Asset Champions Network.

- Be available to talk to your own kids, their friends, your grandkids, your babysitter or youth in the neighborhood. Show them that you care.
- Talk to your neighbors about including youth activities in your neighborhood association. If you don't have an association, form one.
- Encourage your congregation to look at its practices to ensure they are youth friendly.
- Look at your business policies and consider them in light of what will support families and their children. If you employ teens, consider ways you can support their positive development.
- Volunteer to help children at your local school, whether or not you are a parent.
- Provide leadership opportunities for youth through your place of worship, neighborhood, or Boy or Girl Scout troop.

Become an Asset Champion

Children First has a wide network of people who have been trained and intentionally build assets in the places where they live, work, volunteer and go to school. Contact Children First to become an Asset Champion.

Donate

Children First is funded through grants and the generosity of people like you. Consider supporting Children First with a donation.



For more information:
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Your kids.
My kids.
Our kids.

Individuals, families & organizations giving youth the care and support they need.



How Children First started

The seed for Children First was planted in 1992 when the St. Louis Park school superintendent challenged the St. Louis Park Rotary Club to do something for kids. Two entrepreneurs took on the challenge, which resulted in the Children First initiative. Since then, Children First has spread community-wide focusing on the healthy development of all St. Louis Park young people.

What is Children First?

Children First is an initiative that encourages all adults in the community to establish intentional connections with young people to help them find their positive attributes and passions. Children First has a network of people that brings the community together to support children and teens.

What makes Children First different...

- It's a philosophy rather than a program.
- It focuses on positive character building traits.
- It targets all St. Louis Park youth, birth through 18 years old.
- It was founded by a partnership between the business, city, education, health and faith communities.
- It calls everyone to provide support for youth.

Children First & Developmental Assets

Children First is based on Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, common sense, positive experiences and qualities that influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. Studies of more than 5 million young people consistently show that the more assets young people have, the more likely they are to do well in school, volunteer in the community and live a healthy lifestyle. They are also less likely to be involved in risk behaviors such as drugs, sex and alcohol use.

40 Developmental Assets

Support

1. Family support
2. Positive family communication
3. Other adult relationships
4. Caring neighborhood
5. Caring school climate
6. Parent involvement in schooling

Empowerment

7. Community values youth
8. Youth as resources
9. Service to others
10. Safety

Boundaries & Expectations

11. Family boundaries
12. School boundaries
13. Neighborhood boundaries
14. Adult role models
15. Positive peer influence
16. High expectations

Constructive Use of Time

17. Creative activities
18. Youth programs
19. Religious community
20. Time at home

Commitment to Learning

21. Achievement motivation
22. School engagement
23. Homework
24. Bonding to school
25. Reading for pleasure

Positive Values

26. Caring
27. Equality and social justice
28. Integrity
29. Honesty
30. Responsibility
31. Restraint

Social Competencies

32. Planning and decision-making
33. Interpersonal competence
34. Cultural competence
35. Resistance skills
36. Peaceful conflict resolution

Positive Identity

37. Personal power
38. Self-esteem
39. Sense of purpose
40. Positive view of personal future

How Children First Works

Children First relies on the ingenuity of individuals to make asset building come alive in St. Louis Park on a daily basis. In addition, Children First sponsors projects to keep the message front and center in the community.

- The Asset Champions Network is comprised of people who are trained on the developmental asset research and apply it to the places where they work, volunteer, live or go to school.
- The Children First Ice Cream Social in May is a pinnacle family event in St. Louis Park with free ice cream, entertainment and activities.
- The Champions Breakfast connects the community, celebrates what is being done to support our youth and raises funds for Children First.
- St. Louis Park is the only Minnesota community that has been recognized six times by America's Promise Alliance as one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People.

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