



41 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS® FOR TODDLERS (Ages 13–35 months)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets**®—that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



EXTERNAL ASSETS

SUPPORT

- 1. Family Support:** Family life provides high levels of love and support.
- 2. Positive Family Communication:** Parents communicate with toddlers in positive ways. Parents respond to toddlers in a reasonable amount of time and respect their needs.
- 3. Other Adult Relationships:** Parents have support from three or more adults and ask for help when needed. Children receive additional love and comfort from at least one adult other than their parents.
- 4. Caring Neighborhood:** Children experience caring neighbors.
- 5. Caring Out-of-Home Climate:** Children are in caring, encouraging environments outside the home.
- 6. Parent Involvement in Out-of-Home Situations:** Parents are actively involved in helping toddlers succeed in situations outside the home. Parents communicate toddlers' needs to caretakers outside the home.

EMPOWERMENT

- 7. Community Values Children:** The family places toddlers at the center of family life and recognizes the need to set limits for toddlers. Other adults in the community value and appreciate toddlers.
- 8. Children Are Given Useful Roles:** The family involves toddlers in family life.
- 9. Service to Others:** Parents serve others in the community.
- 10. Safety:** Children have safe environments at home, in out-of-home settings, and in the neighborhood. This includes childproofing these environments.

BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS

- 11. Family Boundaries:** Parents are aware of toddlers' preferences and adapt the environment and schedule to suit toddlers' needs. Parents set age-appropriate limits for toddlers.
- 12. Out-of-Home Boundaries:** Childcare settings and other out-of-home environments have clear rules and consequences to protect toddlers while consistently providing appropriate stimulation and enough rest.
- 13. Neighborhood Boundaries:** Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring and supervising children's behavior as they begin to play and interact outside the home.
- 14. Adult Role Models:** Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
- 15. Positive Peer Interaction and Influence:** Toddlers observe siblings and other children interacting in positive ways. They have opportunities to interact with children of various ages.
- 16. Appropriate Expectations for Growth:** Parents have realistic expectations for children's development at this age. Parents encourage development without pushing children beyond their own pace.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

- 17. Creative Activities:** Parents expose toddlers to music, art, or other creative age-appropriate activities each day.
- 18. Out-of-Home Activities:** Parents expose children to limited but stimulating situations outside the home. The family keeps children's needs in mind when attending events.
- 19. Religious Community:** The family regularly attends religious programs or services while keeping children's needs in mind.
- 20. Positive, Supervised Time at Home:** Parents supervise children at all times and provide predictable, enjoyable routines at home.

INTERNAL ASSETS

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

- 21. Achievement Expectation and Motivation:** Family members are motivated to do well at work, at school, and in the community, and model their motivation for children.
- 22. Children Are Engaged in Learning:** Parents and family members model responsive and attentive attitudes at work, at school, in the community, and at home.
- 23. Stimulating Activity and Homework:** Parents encourage children to explore and provide stimulating toys that match children's emerging skills. Parents are sensitive to children's dispositions, preferences, and level of development.
- 24. Enjoyment of Learning and Bonding to School:** Parents enjoy learning and express this through their own learning activities.
- 25. Reading for Pleasure:** Parents read to toddlers every day and find ways for toddlers to participate in enjoyable reading experiences.

POSITIVE VALUES

- 26. Family Values Caring:** Parents convey their beliefs about helping others by modeling their helping behaviors.
- 27. Family Values Equality and Social Justice:** Parents place a high value on promoting social equality, religious tolerance, and reducing hunger and poverty while modeling these beliefs for children.
- 28. Family Values Integrity:** Parents act on their convictions, stand up for their beliefs, and communicate and model this in the family.
- 29. Family Values Honesty:** Parents tell the truth and convey their belief in honesty through their actions.
- 30. Family Values Responsibility:** Parents accept and take personal responsibility.
- 31. Family Values Healthy Lifestyle:** Parents love children, setting the foundation for toddlers to develop healthy attitudes and beliefs about relationships. Parents model, monitor, and teach the importance of good health habits, and provide good nutritional choices and adequate rest and playtime.

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

- 32. Planning and Decision Making:** Parents make all safety and care decisions for children and model safe behavior. As children become more independently mobile, parents allow them to make simple choices.
- 33. Interpersonal Skills:** Parents model positive, constructive interactions with other people. Parents accept and are responsive to how toddlers use actions and words to express their feelings, seeing those expressions as cues to toddlers' needs.
- 34. Cultural Competence:** Parents know and are comfortable with people of different cultural, racial, and/or ethnic backgrounds, and model this to children.
- 35. Resistance Skills:** Parents model resistance skills through their own behavior. Parents aren't overwhelmed by toddlers' needs and demonstrate appropriate resistance skills.
- 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution:** Parents behave in acceptable, nonviolent ways and assist children in developing these skills by helping them solve problems when they're faced with challenging or frustrating circumstances.

POSITIVE IDENTITY

- 37. Personal Power:** Parents feel they have control over things that happen in their own lives and model coping skills, demonstrating healthy ways to deal with frustrations and challenges. Parents respond to children so children begin to learn that they have influence over their immediate surroundings.
- 38. Self-Esteem:** Parents create an environment where children can develop positive self-esteem, giving children appropriate, positive feedback and reinforcement about their skills and competencies.
- 39. Sense of Purpose:** Parents report that their lives have purpose and model these beliefs through their behaviors. Children are curious and explore the world around them.
- 40. Positive View of Personal Future:** Parents are hopeful and positive about their personal future and work to provide a positive future for children.
- 41. Positive Cultural Identity*:** Youth feels comfortable with and proud of their identity, including but not limited to ability status, body size, ethnicity, faith/religion, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, language, race, and sexual orientation.

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*Project Cornerstone established this asset through local community input.