

# Activity

## #3

(Sometimes, unfortunately, some kids even seek the holes out).

There are four physical and personality traits that make up the size of the balloon. These traits are very difficult to change, because you were born with them. Of course, you can change the environment around these traits or even, through lots of effort, change the traits themselves.

### THE TRAITS ARE:

Gender – Male or female.

Enjoying being around people – All types of people.

Believe that the world will be a better place in the future.

Knowing what your talents and intelligences are.

**Gender** – Male balloons tend to be smaller than female balloons. This is easy to see when we count the number of males in prisons vs. the number of women. The current ratio is 9 men to every 1 woman.

**Enjoying being around people** – People who like to be around people tend to be bigger balloons than people who do not like to be around people. No, this is not the same as being shy or quiet; those traits are not part of the balloon. Instead, it is a feeling of liking or disliking people.

## Growing the balloon.

In the dream catcher exercise, you saw the power of the assets. The way the assets worked together to create a web of support for children and youth.

You learned that kids with more assets are more likely to succeed in school and help others than kids with fewer assets. You also discovered that kids with fewer assets are more likely to use alcohol, drugs, and have problems in school

that kids with more assets.

Here is the important lesson. Did you notice that on every dream catcher there were some places that the balloon got held up and did not touch the floor? Did you notice that the size of the balloon matters? That large balloons would be less likely to fall through the cracks, and smaller balloons would need lots, and lots of support?

This is where your individuality comes in. Just because you might have less than 10 assets, or less than 20 assets, or less than 30 assets, doesn't mean that you are doomed to fall through the cracks. You are not doomed because you can choose to stick to the supports you have; like glue. Also, you can be a big balloon and the supports you have are simply enough.

Most of us don't have a clue to how big of a balloon we are. We randomly bounce around upon our supports, trying to avoid the holes.

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**Believe that the world will be a better place in the future.** – People who believe that the world is going to be better in the future are bigger balloons than people who think the world is going to be worse?

**Knowing what your talents and intelligences are.** – People who have found out what they are good at, and what they are smart at, are bigger balloons than people who haven't found that out yet.

## **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Balloons

Colored construction paper

## **ACTIVITIES:**

**1.** Blow a little air into the balloon. Show the students that this is a small balloon. Blow a little more air into the balloon, and show that this has two of the four traits. Blow it up even more and show that it has three of the four traits. Finally, blow it up very large and show that it has four of the four traits. Tie the balloon.

**2.** Have a classroom discussion using the following questions for guidance;

### **Discussion questions.**

V Why are male balloons smaller than female balloons? What are the differences that would

make males more apt to fall through the cracks?

V What could we do, as a school and individuals, to help males be less likely to fall through the cracks?

V How can you tell the difference between kids who like people and kids who don't like people? How do kids who like people behave? How do kids who don't like people behave? What are some things that we could do, as a school and as individuals, to help someone like people more?

V How do people who believe in the future behave? What do they say? How do they act? What can we do as a school and individuals, to help people see that the future could be better than they think?

V What are your talents? What are you smart at? How can a person find out what they are smart at? What can we do, as individuals and a school, to help people learn what they are smart at and what their talents are?

**3.** On a piece of construction paper, have the students draw a large balloon.

**4.** Inside their paper balloon, have them write their first name and list their traits, the ones that keep them from falling through the cracks and hitting the floor.

**5.** Have the students cut these balloons out and display them upon the room.

**6.** Have your students review the list of traits and brainstorm some other traits that would make some people bigger balloons than other kids. Remember, traits are the innate predispositions we are born with; genetic, biological. Assets are the environmental factors that are molded by our social and cultural environment. Help the students understand this difference.