

Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style!

Practical Suggestions for Building Assets in Your Child

Asset # 24- Bonding to School

To Build Asset # 24 Parents and Extended Family Can . . .

Encourage kids to participate in school activities. Help with transportation. Attend their events.

— *Kenai*

Ask about school every day. Celebrate the good; support kids through the bad.

— *Fairbanks*

Have a place in your home to feature your child's school work and notices. Together, keep track of your child's activities and progress.

— *Wrangell*

Share your own experiences during your school years. What was it that helped you have school spirit?

— *Soldotna*

Work with your children when they are young, so they develop a liking for school.

— *Pilot Station*

If your child does not like school, ask them "why." Help your child work to solve the problem so they are more able to enjoy school.

— *St. Michael*

Traditional Ways to Promote Asset # 24

Recognize and honor cultural differences.

— *Shishmaref*

Invite Elders or local residents into school to teach the cultural history.

— *Copper Center*

Have Elders perform traditional ceremonies in the school.

— *Pilot Station*

"Families are the most important influence on children's learning and development and have the most enduring impact on their life course."

Carnegie Task Force on Learning School Engagement

Asset # 24 — Bonding to School

Kids care about their school

51% of youth surveyed by Search Institute have this asset in their lives.*

*Based on Search Institute surveys of almost 100,000 6th to 12th grade youth throughout the United States

What are Assets?

Assets are 40 key building blocks to help kids succeed. Like a dream catcher, assets are the supporting threads in a young person's life that can keep away harm and invite goodness.

Words of Encouragement

When students care about their school they feel connected and have a safe place to go. Often students involved in clubs, student government, sports, study groups, and other extra-curricular activities feel the most connected to their school. They have a sense of unity with other students and a sense of pride in their school.

In high school I was in the student government for four years and I saw how our principal listened to us and represented our ideas when he went to meet with teachers or the superintendent. The students shared the decision-making power with our principle about school rules and other issues that had an impact on us.

From my experience students who cared the most about school were usually the students who had good experiences in school. It's important to stop any problems as soon as they start. If the child doesn't like school, ask them 'why.' Help the child work to solve the problems so they are able to enjoy school.

When parents encourage kids to participate in school activities it helps the students feel connected to their school and other students. The parents can offer support by helping with transportation and attending events.

Community members can encourage students to care for their school by supporting school fundraisers.

Buy a bumper sticker or school t-shirt. Attend events and congratulate students who were outstanding.

Help students feel connected to their school. By doing this students will care about their school. There will be 'school spirit' within each and every student as they show pride in their school.

Research

When youth care about their school there are many positive outcomes. The students often have better mental health and lower levels of risk behaviors than those students who don't feel bonded to the school. School bonding has also been associated with:

Lessened drug use

McGee, 1992; Paulson et al., 1990

Greater use of 'deep' or 'transformational' study techniques

Connell, Halpern Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usiner, 1995

Higher academic self-concept, more time spent on homework

Marsh, 1991

More positive perception of number of personal strengths (among males)

Williams & McGee, 1991

Better school attendance

Connell, Halpern Felsher, et al., 1995

Greater feelings of support, both at home and at school

Connell, Halpern Felsher, et al, 1995

Quotes:

"Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community."

- Anthony J. D'Angelo

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Association of Alaska School Boards'
Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement (Alaska ICE)
316 West 11th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Tel: (907) 586-1486
Fax: (907) 586-1450
Email: alaskaice@asab.org