

# Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style!

## Practical Suggestions for Building Assets in Your Child

### Asset # 6- Parent Involvement in Schooling

#### To Build Asset #6 Parents and Extended Family Can . . .

1. Attend parent-teacher conferences. — *Napaskiak*
2. Help children do homework by correcting, answering questions, practice spelling words together — but don't do the work for them. — *Naknek*
3. Participate in school activities. — *Toksook Bay*
4. Ask your children questions about their day. Go beyond yes/no questions. Let them give you details about what they did and learned. — *McGrath*
5. Help your child get enough sleep and healthy food, and give them a positive send-off each morning. — *Wasilla*
6. Make positive statements about the school and teachers. Be enthusiastic about school. — *Valdez*
7. Help provide child care for neighbors or friends when they need it to attend school events. — *Fairbanks*

#### Traditional Ways to Promote Asset #6

Help raise money for student groups. Hold bake sales. Sell raffle tickets for gas/oil. Women can get together to sew kuspuks for the cheerleaders. — *Chuathbaluk*

Teach Native cultural activities in the school. — *Sleetmute*

Have a sharing circle once a week and have a different student each week invite their parents. Be sure the parent knows the topic to be shared that week. — *Nondalton*

#### Simple Ways to Help Kids

Three things that parents and extended family can do:

1. Vote, with kids needs in mind.
2. Make them a good breakfast.
3. Expect their best, not perfection.

#### Quote:

What we want is to see the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child. — *George Bernard Shaw*

### Asset #6 — Parent Involvement in Schooling

School provides a caring, encouraging environment.

29% 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 Wisdom:

A free and public education for all was the vision our fore fathers (and mothers) had 140 years ago. They believed that public education was often the only opportunity an individual would have to improve their station in life; to move from a life of oppression and poverty, to being empowered to follow the American dream.

Today, the citizens of our nation still hold this belief. We have state-of-the-art schools that are filled with well-educated professionals, computers, books, and resources. These educators use the latest curricula, are genuinely concerned about the success of each student, and have high expectations for every student who enters the door.

However, we know that state-of-the-art schools are not enough. As a matter of fact, the research clearly shows that parent involvement is the key to the academic success of a student — at each and every grade level.

It is not enough for the public to provide the opportunity for a free and public education. That is only part of the equation. The other part requires that recipient embrace the opportunity provided. We (the public) can lead a youth to school, but we can not make her think. Common sense and research show that parents, who work to support the school and its goals, are crucial to their kid's success in school. What are you doing to support your child in school? Is it enough?

## News You Can Use

The link between a parent's involvement in the schooling of their teen and that youth's success in school is obvious and profound. Even though most of the studies have been done with elementary aged children, the data clearly shows the benefits to middle and high school students.

Palmer et al (1993), after reviewing dozens of studies, found that parent involvement in schooling promotes success at all grade levels. Even more significant is the fact that the typically strong association between a family's socioeconomic status and the youth's academic achievement disappears when parents become involved in the schooling of their kids. Parents who are monetarily poor, who are highly involved with helping their children succeed academically, promote academic success to the degree that wealthy parents do. Chavkin and Gonzalez (1995) concluded that parent involvement was twice as predictive of academic success as socioeconomic status.

A recent analysis of national Assessment of Educational Progress data comparing 1973 math scores with 1992 scores indicates that the scores of Latino youth increase significantly, even while the average Latino family income is shrinking (Lawton, 1998). This increase is to greater involvement in the schools by these parents.

The book, **Helping Kids Succeed-Alaskan Style**, is a common sense, easy to read book that is written by Alaskans for Alaskans.

**Alaska Resident Price: \$5.00** includes shipping & handling

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