

20. Time at Home

Quality time as a family

Work, school, activities, friends, and other obligations can at times pull family members apart rather than bring them together. You don't necessarily have to change activities to find family time. Just be creative. Time at Home is Asset 20 of Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, the qualities, experiences, and relationships that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

Here are the facts

Research shows spending quality time together as a family helps young people strengthen skills such as leadership, good health, and success in school. About 51 percent of young people, ages 11–18, spend no more than two nights a week with friends “with nothing special to do,” according to Search Institute surveys. Protecting young people from risky behaviors and helping them develop positive behavior is easier when you spend time together as a family.

Tips for building this asset

Simply start spending time together: First, choose an activity the entire family enjoys. Then, commit to do the activity together one evening a week. Decide if you want to continue the activity or try something different. Ask yourselves: How often do we laugh together? Have fun together? Enjoy being with each other?

Also try this

In your home and family: Cook dinner together, with each family member preparing a dish. Then, for a fun change, eat dessert first.

In your neighborhood and community: Invite your child's friend and his or her family over for an evening of family time—movies, games, popcorn and other treats.

In your school and youth program: Avoid scheduling practices or meetings that conflict with the dinner hour. It's important for families to eat together.