

# Developmental Assets: A Profile of Our Youth



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2022 Search Institute Survey  
*Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*

**Key Findings**

November 2022

# What will be covered?

- Overview
- What are the 40 Developmental Assets?
- What do our students say?
- Current Risk-Behaviors
- The Power of Assets
- What have we learned?

# Overview

- In order to gain a better understanding of student's attitudes and actions relating to at-risk behaviors, the Hopewell Valley Municipal Alliance and the Hopewell Valley Regional School District surveyed 1,331 students in grades 6–12 in May.
- The survey results give an assessment of protective factors (Developmental Assets) present in the lives of our youth and measures the level of risk-behavior (tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, violence).
- The results provide an opportunity for evaluation, planning and change.

# What are Developmental Assets?

Introduced by the Search Institute, they are 40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices a young person makes.

- **External Assets:** Positive experiences that surround youth with support, personal boundaries and expectations provided by families, schools, neighborhoods, community groups, and other family serving organizations.
- **Internal Assets:** Individual qualities that guide strong positive values, educational commitments and develop a sense of confidence, passion, and purpose.

# External Assets

- **Support** 1. Family support 2. Positive family communication 3. Other adult relationships 4. Caring neighborhood 5. Caring school climate 6. Parent involvement in schooling
- **Empowerment** 7. Community values youth 8. Children as resources 9. Service to others 10. Safety
- **Boundaries & Expectations** 11. Family boundaries 12. School Boundaries 13. Neighborhood boundaries 14. Adult role models 15. Positive Peer Influence 16. High expectations
- **Constructive Use of Time** 17. Creative activities 18. Child programs 19. Religious community 20. Time at home

# Internal Assets

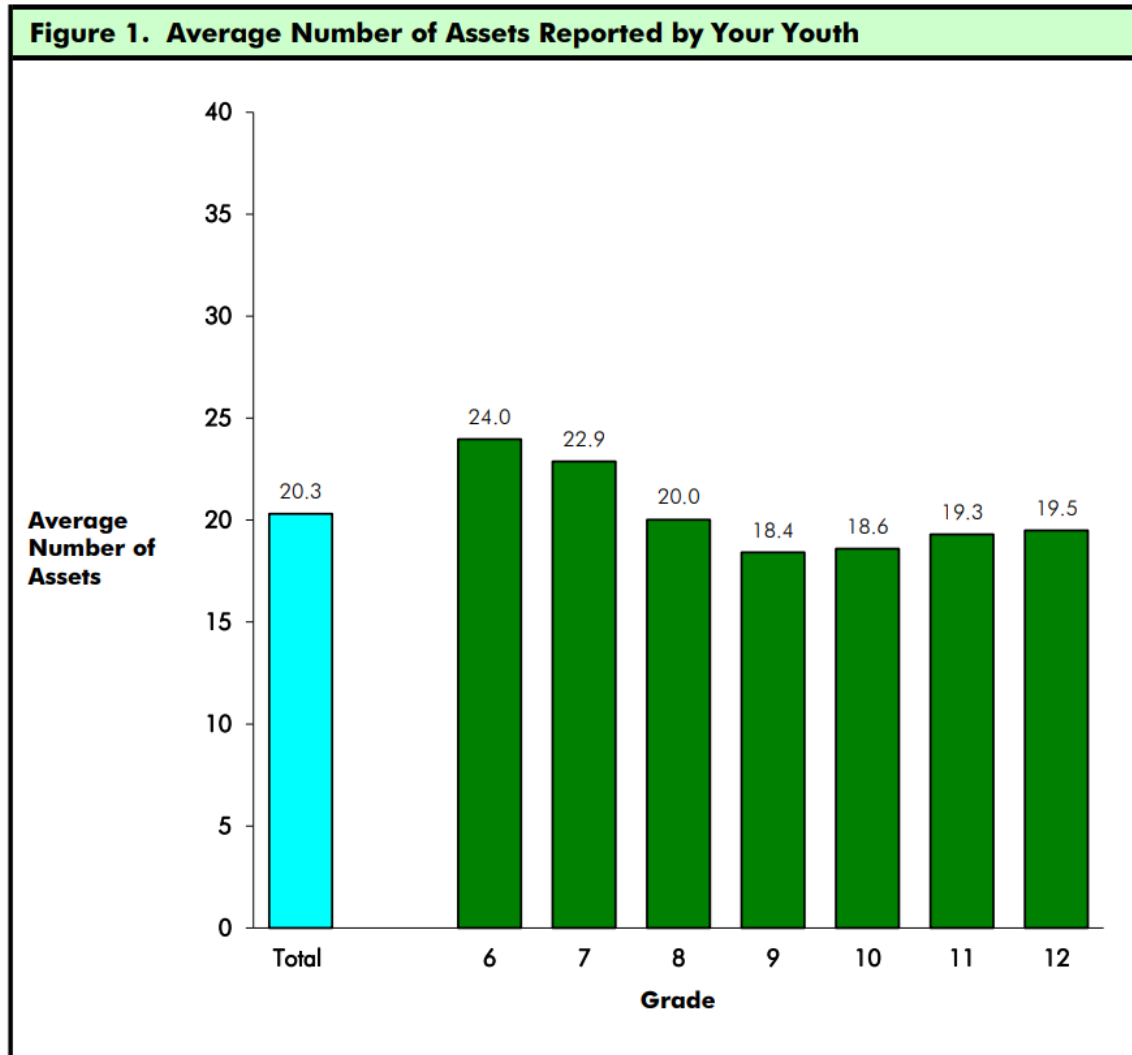
- **Commitment to Learning** 21. Achievement Motivation 22. Learning Engagement 23. Homework 24. Bonding to school 25. Reading for Pleasure
- **Positive Values** 26. Caring 27. Equality and social justice 28. Integrity 29. Honesty 30. Responsibility 31. Healthy Lifestyle
- **Social Competencies** 32. Planning and decision making 33. Interpersonal Competence 34. Cultural Competence 35. Resistance skills 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution
- **Positive Identity** 37. Personal power 38. Self-esteem 39. Sense of purpose 40. Positive view of personal future

# More assets = Better outcomes

- For optimal youth outcomes, the more assets youth have, the better.
- Having 31–40 assets is better than 21–30, which is better than having 11–20, and so on.
- In an ideal world, communities would strive to ensure that all youth eventually experience between 31 and 40 of the Developmental Assets.



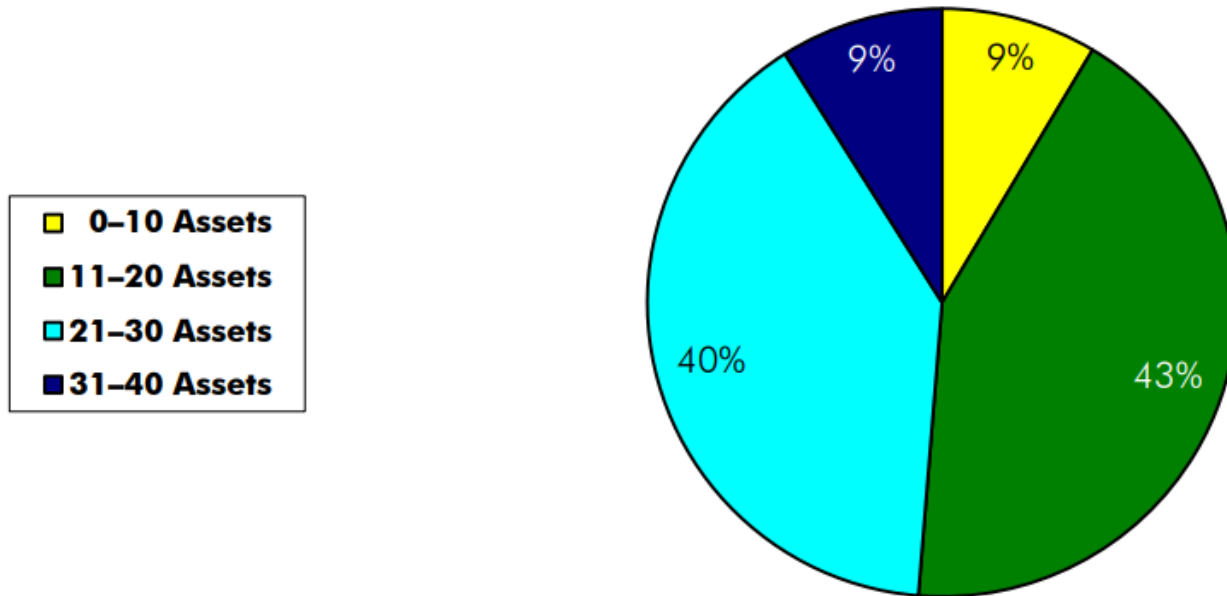
# How many assets do our students experience?





# What percent of our students experience Developmental Assets?

**Figure 2. The Asset Challenge Facing Your Community**



# What do our students say?

Students tell us they are ***strongest*** in the following assets:

- Family Support: **74%**
- Positive Peer Influence: **81%**
- Youth Programs: **68%**
- Achievement Motivation: **74%**
- School Engagement: **82%**
- Equality & Social Justice: **71%**
- Integrity: **74%**
- Honesty: **68%**
- Responsibility: **70%**

# What do our students say?

Students tell us they are *weakest* in the following assets:

- Positive Family communication: **34%**
- Caring School Climate: **33%**
- Parent Involvement in Schooling: **22%**
- Community Values Youth: **24%**
- Adult Role Models: **39%**
- Restraint: **43%**
- Planning and Decision-Making: **40%**
- Personal Power: **38%**
- Self-Esteem: **41%**

# Current Risk-Behaviors

- **Alcohol 22%** (used once or more in the last 30 days)

6<sup>th</sup> (5%) 7<sup>th</sup> (6%) 8<sup>th</sup> (7%) 9<sup>th</sup> (22%) 10<sup>th</sup> (27%) 11<sup>th</sup> (40%) 12<sup>th</sup> (51%)

- **Tobacco 3%** (smoked once or more in the last 30 days)

6<sup>th</sup> (0%) 7<sup>th</sup> (0%) 8<sup>th</sup> (2%) 9<sup>th</sup> (12%) 10<sup>th</sup> (13%) 11<sup>th</sup> (21%) 12<sup>th</sup> (32%)

- **Vaping 12%** (tobacco, marijuana once or more in the last 30 days)

6<sup>th</sup> (1%) 7<sup>th</sup> (0%) 8<sup>th</sup> (2%) 9<sup>th</sup> (15%) 10<sup>th</sup> (18%) 11<sup>th</sup> (22%) 12<sup>th</sup> (26%)

- **Marijuana 9%** (used once or more in the last 30 days)

6<sup>th</sup> (1%) 7<sup>th</sup> (0%) 8<sup>th</sup> (2%) 9<sup>th</sup> (11%) 10<sup>th</sup> (12%) 11<sup>th</sup> (18%) 12<sup>th</sup> (19%)

- **Drinking 3%** (drove after drinking in the last 12 months)

6<sup>th</sup> (0%) 7<sup>th</sup> (0%) 8<sup>th</sup> (0%) 9<sup>th</sup> (6%) 10<sup>th</sup> (4%) 11<sup>th</sup> (6%) 12<sup>th</sup> (7%)

# Current Risk-Behaviors

- **Driving and Alcohol 16%** (rode once or more in the last 12 months with a driver who has been drinking)

6<sup>th</sup> (11%) 7<sup>th</sup> (14%) 8<sup>th</sup> (14%) 9<sup>th</sup> (20%) 10<sup>th</sup> (22%) 11<sup>th</sup> (16%) 12<sup>th</sup> (12%)

- **Violence 16%** (hit someone once or more in the last 12 months)

6<sup>th</sup> (14%) 7<sup>th</sup> (15%) 8<sup>th</sup> (13%) 9<sup>th</sup> (25%) 10<sup>th</sup> (19%) 11<sup>th</sup> (13%) 12<sup>th</sup> (10%)

- **Eating Disorder 23%** (has engaged in bulimic or anorexic behavior)

6<sup>th</sup> (26%) 7<sup>th</sup> (14%) 8<sup>th</sup> (23%) 9<sup>th</sup> (30%) 10<sup>th</sup> (26%) 11<sup>th</sup> (25%) 12<sup>th</sup> (22%)

- **Depression 18%** (felt sad or depressed most or all of the time in the last month)

6<sup>th</sup> (18%) 7<sup>th</sup> (15%) 8<sup>th</sup> (15%) 9<sup>th</sup> (21%) 10<sup>th</sup> (19%) 11<sup>th</sup> (18%) 12<sup>th</sup> (17%)

- **Attempted Suicide 11%** (has attempted suicide one or more times)

6<sup>th</sup> (9%) 7<sup>th</sup> (8%) 8<sup>th</sup> (9%) 9<sup>th</sup> (17%) 10<sup>th</sup> (14%) 11<sup>th</sup> (12%) 12<sup>th</sup> (11%)

# The Power of Assets

**Table 17. Percent of Youth Reporting Nine Substance Use-Related Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level**

Risk-Taking Behavior		Total Sample	Number of Assets <sup>12</sup>			
Category	Definition		0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
<b>Alcohol</b>	Used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days	22	44	26	18	6
	Got drunk once or more in the last two weeks	11	24	14	6	3
<b>Tobacco</b>	Smoked cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days	3	13	4	1	0
	Used smokeless tobacco once or more in the last 12 months	2	11	2	0	0
<b>Vaping</b>	Vaped tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana once or more in the last 30 days	12	37	16	5	0
<b>Marijuana</b>	Used marijuana or hashish once or more in the last 30 days	9	27	10	5	0
<b>Other Drug Use</b>	Used heroin or other narcotics once or more in the last 12 months	2	10	2	0	0
<b>Driving and Alcohol</b>	Drove after drinking once or more in the last 12 months	3	10	4	1	0
	Rode (once or more in the last 12 months) with a driver who had been drinking	16	32	20	10	3

# The Power of Assets

**Table 18. Percent of Youth Reporting 15 Additional Risk-Taking Behaviors by Asset Level**

Risk-Taking Behavior		Total Sample	Number of Assets <sup>13</sup>			
Category	Definition		0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
<b>Violence</b>	Hit someone once or more in the last 12 months	16	31	19	10	2
	Physically hurt someone once or more in the last 12 months	7	21	8	3	1
	Used a weapon to get something from a person once or more in the last 12 months	2	10	3	1	0
	Been in a group fight once or more in the last 12 months	10	20	11	8	3
	Carried a weapon for protection once or more in the last 12 months	9	24	11	5	0
	Threatened physical harm to someone once or more in the last 12 months	15	30	19	9	2
<b>Eating Disorder</b>	Has engaged in bulimic or anorexic behavior	23	48	27	17	8
<b>Depression</b>	Felt sad or depressed most or all of the time in the last month	18	35	24	10	2
<b>Attempted Suicide</b>	Has attempted suicide one or more times	11	31	15	5	0

# LGBTQ+ Student Snapshot

- 434 students (33%)
- Experience average of 18 assets
- Most assets aligned with the exception of the Empowerment and Positive Identity categories and specifically Family Support, Positive Family Communication being lower
- Most risk taking behaviors aligned with the exception of tobacco, vaping and marijuana use being higher.
- Additional risk-taking behaviors being higher were Eating Disorders, Depression and Attempted Suicide (22%)



# Other items of note

- 25% of juniors and 34% of seniors attended 5 or more parties in the last 12 months “where other kids their age were drinking” compared to 8% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 9% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders.
- In an average week, 18% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders responded ‘none’ to “how many times do all of the people in your family who live with you eat dinner together.”
- 30% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders think there is no risk in smoking marijuana once or twice a week.
- 66% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 62% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders think it’s very wrong to use prescription drugs not prescribed to them.

# What have we learned?

- Alcohol continues to be the number one drug of choice
- Marijuana is perceived as less of a risk than other substances with less parent disapproval.
- To be continually mindful of suicide risk of students, especially those who identify LGBTQ+
- A third of our students surveyed identify as LGBTQ+
- Eating disorders impact almost a quarter of students surveyed

# What can we do?

- Help build assets in our children's lives
- Become familiar with the list of 40 Developmental Assets
- Have children and parents complete an asset check-list
- Visit: [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)  
[www.keepconnected.searchinstitute.org](http://www.keepconnected.searchinstitute.org)  
[www.hvalliance.org](http://www.hvalliance.org)

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