

Increasing the asset-building power of programs and practices

This is a tool to help you examine your programs through an asset lens. It can be an inventory – a starting point for you to take stock of your efforts. Under “Program or practice,” list formal (peer-mentoring program) or informal (staff greets children and youth by name every morning) programs or practices, identify which assets you are intentionally building, then list ways to make them even more meaningful. This is a great conversation starter for teams. Here’s a sample of what it might look like:

Program or practice	Assets promoted	Ways to increase asset-building potential
Staff greets children/youth by name every morning	Other adult relationships, Caring climate, Safety, Adult role models, Bonding, Caring, Self-esteem	Ask a question Engage in conversation Comment on positive behavior Be warm and welcoming
Peer-mentoring program	Caring climate, Children as resources, Service to others, Positive peer influence, Bonding to school, Caring	Block Grade 11 lunch with Grade 9 lunch so they can interact Give a sum of money to mentors and ask them to work together and build a budget of how to spend it Discuss clear boundaries and expectations Practice life skills together, such as cooking
Catch kids doing it right	Caring climate, Caring, Fosters relationships	Send them a note about it Say, “Thanks for doing that – you are a very caring person.”
Anger management group	Other adult relationships, Adult role models, Positive peer influence, high expectations, Youth programs, restraint, Interpersonal competence, Personal power	Involve family members Help find support for youth at school Provide opportunity to explore creative activities and outlets Stay involved after program ends
Arrive to school on time	Caring neighborhood, School climate, Parent involvement in schooling, School boundaries, High expectations, School engagement, Responsibility	Principal greets parents in the morning Teachers greet students in hallways Principal asks parents for help Give parents tips on how to make their morning smoother Offer free apples – first-come, first-served Play music in hallways Investigate parking lot safety