

Article #14

The 40 Developmental Assets were assessed in June 2005 using the survey *Me and My World*. Of the children surveyed in our community, 56% report that they experience the asset *family boundaries*.

Asset #11: Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts.

Consider this . . .

There is a strong connection between this asset and positive family communication. To have reasonable and effective boundaries, families need to be able to openly share their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. To keep track of one another, family members need ways to keep in touch.

Try this . . .

Adults:

- Together, talk about how to establish family rules and consequences.
- Keep in mind that rules and consequences may need to vary depending on age and temperament, but they will be most effective when they are as fair and consistent as possible.
- Make it a family expectation to know each other’s whereabouts and plans. Have a system for keeping track of each other (such as a message board, a family calendar, cell phones, voice mail, or pagers).
- Have regular family meetings about how things are going.
- Be intentional about spending time together.

Youth:

- Make a point *before* they ask of telling your parents where you'll be and when you'll be home.
- Encourage your parents to include you in establishing family rules and consequences.
- If you feel a rule or a consequence is unfair, propose an alternative.

From *Get the Word Out: Communication Tools and Ideas for Asset Builders Everywhere*.

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