

Article #29

The 40 Developmental Assets were assessed in June 2005 using the survey *Me and My World*. Of the children surveyed in our community, 76% report that they experience the asset *Bonding to school*.

Asset #24: Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school.

Consider this . . .

At their worst, schools can be like factories, churning out graduates (or dropouts), where everyone goes home at the end of the day and tries to think about something else until they have to go back the next day. At their best, schools can be sources of pride, connection, belonging, and energy—for students, staff, and communities.

Try this . . .

Adults:

- Organize a “Make a Difference Day” for your school. Clean, paint, or do something else that says, “We care about this place!”
- Support legislation that provides adequate funding for all aspects of school life (teachers, extracurricular activities, building maintenance, and so on).
- Join a club or group. If there isn’t one that appeals to you, see if you can get one started.
- Invite students to make a time capsule and bury it somewhere on your school grounds.
- Create a school garden, farm, or natural area. Invite all students to be involved in maintaining it.
- Set up a school bulletin board at home. Use it to keep track of events and assignments.

Youth:

- Learn a little about your school's history by looking at old yearbooks or talking with alumni. Try to find out the history of your school mascot.
- Encourage school administrators and teachers to recognize the accomplishments of all students—not just the obvious leaders.
- Find or start at least one class, club, or team at school that fits with your interests.
- Support your friends and encourage them if they are struggling in school.

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

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