

Article #47

The 40 Developmental Assets were assessed in June 2005 using the survey *Me and My World*. Of the children surveyed in our community, 52% report that they experience the asset *Sense of purpose*.

Asset #39: Sense of purpose—Young person sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life.

Consider this . . .

A person's sense of purpose evolves and changes with age and experience. Thus, building this asset takes more than just talking and thinking; it requires adults to engage young people in activities that help them experience the world and find their place in it.

Try this . . .

Adults:

- Take young people on a “service tour.” Choose a different type of service to try each week or month.
- Take young people seriously; believe that they have important contributions to make.
- Seize moments to affirm young people's strengths and contributions.

Youth:

- If you can find the means, travel. There are many opportunities to work in or visit other parts of the country or the world (some of these have scholarships or work-study options available). Learning more about the wider world may help you discover what's important and meaningful to you.
- Read, read, read. Reading is a great way to learn about people and issues.
- Get to know adults who seem to have found a purpose in life. Talk with them about their cares and concerns.

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

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