

# 40 Developmental Assets® for Early Childhood (ages 3 to 5)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



<b>External Assets</b>	<b>Support</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Family support</b>—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) provide the child with high levels of consistent and predictable love, physical care, and positive attention in ways that are responsive to the child's individuality.</li> <li><b>2. Positive family communication</b>—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) express themselves positively and respectfully, engaging young children in conversations that invite their input.</li> <li><b>3. Other adult relationships</b>—With the family's support, the child experiences consistent, caring relationships with adults outside the family.</li> <li><b>4. Caring neighbors</b>—The child's network of relationships includes neighbors who provide emotional support and a sense of belonging.</li> <li><b>5. Caring climate in child-care and educational settings</b>—Caregivers and teachers create environments that are nurturing, accepting, encouraging, and secure.</li> <li><b>6. Parent involvement in child care and education</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers together create a consistent and supportive approach to fostering the child's successful growth.</li> </ol>
	<b>Empowerment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>7. Community cherishes and values young children</b>—Children are welcomed and included throughout community life.</li> <li><b>8. Children seen as resources</b>—The community demonstrates that children are valuable resources by investing in a child-rearing system of family support and high-quality activities and resources to meet children's physical, social, and emotional needs.</li> <li><b>9. Service to others</b>—The child has opportunities to perform simple but meaningful and caring actions for others.</li> <li><b>10. Safety</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, teachers, neighbors, and the community take action to ensure children's health and safety.</li> </ol>
	<b>Boundaries &amp; Expectations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>11. Family boundaries</b>—The family provides consistent supervision for the child and maintains reasonable guidelines for behavior that the child can understand and achieve.</li> <li><b>12. Boundaries in child-care and educational settings</b>—Caregivers and educators use positive approaches to discipline and natural consequences to encourage self-regulation and acceptable behaviors.</li> <li><b>13. Neighborhood boundaries</b>—Neighbors encourage the child in positive, acceptable behavior, as well as intervene in negative behavior, in a supportive, nonthreatening way.</li> <li><b>14. Adult role models</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and other adults model self-control, social skills, engagement in learning, and healthy lifestyles.</li> <li><b>15. Positive peer relationships</b>—Parent(s) and caregivers seek to provide opportunities for the child to interact positively with other children.</li> <li><b>16. Positive expectations</b>—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers encourage and support the child in behaving appropriately, undertaking challenging tasks, and performing activities to the best of her or his abilities.</li> </ol>
	<b>Constructive Use of Time</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>17. Play and creative activities</b>—The child has daily opportunities to play in ways that allow self-expression, physical activity, and interaction with others.</li> <li><b>18. Out-of-home and community programs</b>—The child experiences well-designed programs led by competent, caring adults in well-maintained settings.</li> <li><b>19. Religious community</b>—The child participates in age-appropriate religious activities and caring relationships that nurture her or his spiritual development.</li> <li><b>20. Time at home</b>—The child spends most of her or his time at home participating in family activities and playing constructively, with parent(s) guiding TV and electronic game use.</li> </ol>

<b>Internal Assets</b>	<b>Commitment to Learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>21. Motivation to mastery</b>—The child responds to new experiences with curiosity and energy, resulting in the pleasure of mastering new learning and skills.</li> <li><b>22. Engagement in learning experiences</b>—The child fully participates in a variety of activities that offer opportunities for learning.</li> <li><b>23. Home-program connection</b>—The child experiences security, consistency, and connections between home and out-of-home care programs and learning activities.</li> <li><b>24. Bonding to programs</b>—The child forms meaningful connections with out-of-home care and educational programs.</li> <li><b>25. Early literacy</b>—The child enjoys a variety of pre-reading activities, including adults reading to her or him daily, looking at and handling books, playing with a variety of media, and showing interest in pictures, letters, and numbers.</li> </ol>
	<b>Positive Values</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>26. Caring</b>—The child begins to show empathy, understanding, and awareness of others' feelings.</li> <li><b>27. Equality and social justice</b>—The child begins to show concern for people who are excluded from play and other activities or not treated fairly because they are different.</li> <li><b>28. Integrity</b>—The child begins to express her or his views appropriately and to stand up for a growing sense of what is fair and right.</li> <li><b>29. Honesty</b>—The child begins to understand the difference between truth and lies, and is truthful to the extent of her or his understanding.</li> <li><b>30. Responsibility</b>—The child begins to follow through on simple tasks to take care of her- or himself and to help others.</li> <li><b>31. Self-regulation</b>—The child increasingly can identify, regulate, and control her or his behaviors in healthy ways, using adult support constructively in particularly stressful situations.</li> </ol>
	<b>Social Competencies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>32. Planning and decision making</b>—The child begins to plan for the immediate future, choosing from among several options and trying to solve problems.</li> <li><b>33. Interpersonal skills</b>—The child cooperates, shares, plays harmoniously, and comforts others in distress.</li> <li><b>34. Cultural awareness and sensitivity</b>—The child begins to learn about her or his own cultural identity and to show acceptance of people who are racially, physically, culturally, or ethnically different from her or him.</li> <li><b>35. Resistance skills</b>—The child begins to sense danger accurately, to seek help from trusted adults, and to resist pressure from peers to participate in unacceptable or risky behavior.</li> <li><b>36. Peaceful conflict resolution</b>—The child begins to compromise and resolve conflicts without using physical aggression or hurtful language.</li> </ol>
	<b>Positive Identity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>37. Personal power</b>—The child can make choices that give a sense of having some influence over things that happen in her or his life.</li> <li><b>38. Self-esteem</b>—The child likes her- or himself and has a growing sense of being valued by others.</li> <li><b>39. Sense of purpose</b>—The child anticipates new opportunities, experiences, and milestones in growing up.</li> <li><b>40. Positive view of personal future</b>—The child finds the world interesting and enjoyable, and feels that he or she has a positive place in it.</li> </ol>