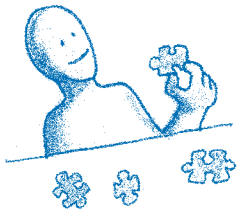


Where do I fit in?

There are an abundance of great opportunities for youth, parents, not-for-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses and schools to get involved with the partnership including:

- Join the youth council
- Plan or volunteer at community service events and special events
- Work with the media
- Take a leadership role
- Share resources and equipment
- Provide transportation
- Join the advisory board or task forces
- Mentor a youth
- Host meetings
- Help in fundraising and grant writing
- Perform research
- Recruit new members

Organization Information

Engaging a Community to Develop Healthy Youth

Helpful Handbook

Action for Youth

PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH FOUNDATION

What is an Action for Youth Partnership?

In 1997, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation (PdNHF) began the Action for Youth Initiative to promote the health and wellness of youth. The Action for Youth Initiative consists of regional partnerships that are comprised of parents, youth, businesses, schools, faith-based institutions, and non-profit organizations. All of these partnership members work together to create a network or a "web of support" that more effectively develops healthy youth. The partnerships are based on the following:

1. The 40 Developmental Assets framework for developing healthy youth.
2. The power of partnering and the web of support.
3. The importance of meaningful youth involvement.

Support

- Family Support
- Positive Family Communication
- Other Adult Relationships
- Caring Neighborhood
- Caring School Climate
- Parent Involvement In Schooling

Empowerment

- Community Values Youth
- Youth As Resources
- Service To Other
- Safety

Commitment to Learning

- Achievement Motivation
- School Engagement
- Homework
- Bonding At School
- Reading For Pleasure

Social Competence

- Planning And Decision Making
- Interpersonal Competence
- Cultural Competence
- Resistance Skills
- Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Boundaries & Expectations

- Family Boundaries
- School Boundaries
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Adult Role Models
- Positive Peer Influence
- High Expectations

Contructive Use of Time

- Creative Activities
- Youth Programs
- Religious Community
- Time At Home

Positive Values

- Caring
- Equality And Social Justice
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Restraint

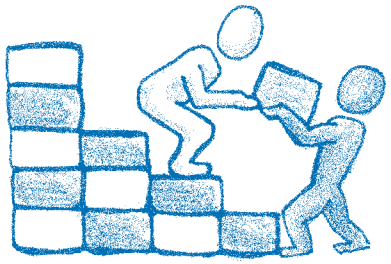
Positive Identity

- Personal Power
- Self-esteem
- Sense Of Purpose
- Positive View Of Personal Future

What are the 40 Developmental Assets?

The Search Institute™ identified forty positive qualities and experiences that protect youth and promote healthier life outcomes. These assets are considered **building blocks for developing healthy youth**. Developmental assets are things most people think of when asked to list what young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

The 40 Assets



Research shows that youth with fewer of these assets are more likely to be involved in unhealthy behaviors. However, young people with more of these assets are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors such as abstaining from drugs, succeeding in school, exercising and eating well.

Structure of the Partnership

The partnership has a strong structure with four well-defined components. These four components help the partnership achieve its goals and address important issues. The structure consists of:

Advisory Board

Represents a cross-section of the partnership, including youth, and works on behalf of its participants. Members sit on partnership task forces, bring in new resources and partners, and guide and oversee the partnership coordinator. Members often serve a specific term period.

Partnership Coordinator

Oversees outreach and promotion, organizes and hosts the meetings, advises the youth council, organizes donations and resources, and works with the advisory board to reach the partnership's goals.

Fiscal Agent

An organization that serves as a pass-through for funding, manages money on behalf of the partnership, distributes funds as determined by the Advisory Board and partnership, and ensures that funds are used properly.

El Concilio de Jóvenes

Open to all youth. Advise and advocate for the partnership, promote the 40 developmental assets, and take on community improvement projects.

Meaningful Youth Involvement

Youth involvement is an opportunity for youth not just to learn about leadership but also to engage in leadership. Having youth watch adults lead is important but allowing youth to lead can make a deep and lasting impact that results in a lifetime commitment to facilitating positive change.

QUICK TIPS:

1. **Engage youth actively**
2. **Respect youth fully**
3. **Listen to youth openly**

Actively engaged youth are a tremendous resource because they provide a wealth of information by providing important feedback, input and guidance. Furthermore, youth involvement creates a stronger partnership by increasing the "web of support." For example, youth can be involved in presenting and promoting the issues of the partnership to other community members. This shows that young people are valuable resources to be heard and respected.

Building assets, protecting youth and providing healthier life outcomes is more successful when young people are actively engaged in meaningful ways at all levels. Meaningful means that they are engaged beyond listening and nodding their heads at ideas that adults propose. Their voice has to be listened to as equal to the voice of adults. Youth can tell when they are not listened to authentically.

The Power of Partnering and the Web of Support

When people work together they increase their ability to overcome obstacles, undertake large projects and support youth. Partnerships serve youth more effectively by creating a "web of support." The web consists of many community partners coming together and openly sharing resources such as information, equipment, supplies, space and volunteers. The web is like a big net held tightly by community members such as parents, teachers, religious leaders, youth development specialists, business people, law enforcement, and government officials.

By being a part of a web of support, everyone wins because there is increased access to valuable resources and benefits including:

- New friends and relationships
- Networking opportunities
- A chance to offer feedback and input in the development of the community
- Satisfaction of making a positive difference
- Community service opportunities
- Exciting ideas
- Training opportunities
- Potential funding
- Fun!!!