

Connect!

LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN ASSETS

II



Caring

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Introduction

THE CONNECT! II LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN ASSETS

Curriculum is centered around strengthening the “Developmental Assets” of Youth. These 40 “Developmental Assets” as identified by the Search Institute of Minneapolis have proven to be crucial building blocks that youth and families need in order to succeed in life.

Throughout the country, organizations and schools recognize that these assets can be built and strengthened in our youth with the quiet revolution termed “mentoring.” A mentor is defined as a “wise and trusted friend; or someone that shows the way.”

In the 1997 Summit on America’s Future, leaders from all across the country hailed mentoring as one of the necessary solutions to help ensure a stable future for America’s youth. They were supported by research proving that mentoring works. Goals were set to find and enlist 2,000,000 mentors by the year 2000. That goal has been met!

Volunteer mentors come with a variety of education and experience. Asking mentors to work in a structured program to build or strengthen “Developmental Assets” in youth without prior training, raises serious concerns.

In order for meaningful interaction to occur between mentors and youth, a basic asset-related curriculum was needed. **CONNECT! II...** was developed out of this necessity. **CONNECT! II...** is a supplement of activities that apply to additional developmental assets from The Search Institute.

CONNECT! II... is designed to give meaningful interaction during the time mentors spend with their youth. It is designed to be flexible enough to be conducted informally on a one-on-one basis, or with a small group of mentors and mentees, or it can also be used during family trainings or family activity nights. The activities are designed to help the youth develop life-long competencies based on the “Developmental Assets” model.

From the volunteer/mentor perspective, **CONNECT! I** and **II...** provide readily available materials and activities that can be prepared and used quickly. **CONNECT! I** and **II...** will help mentors effectively meet the individual needs of each youth.

Using This Book: To The Mentor

Each of the units/chapters in this curriculum is dedicated to one of the “40 Developmental Assets” as identified by the Search Institute. The Individual units or chapters are designed to: 1) identify the asset or quality that you would like to work on with your youth, 2) give specific instructions for fun, active learning activities, and 3) follow up with concrete discussion questions that will help the youth achieve higher level thinking and processing skills. Each unit is self-contained. Activities can be printed off for to be used individually by one or several sets of mentors and their youth.

Goal And Objective Page

Following the title page is a goal and objective page. This page lists the asset or quality, followed by the goal the youth is expected to meet if successfully achieving that quality. Each goal is broken into three concrete objectives for you and your youth to work on. To the right of each objective is a list of activities that can be completed by you and your youth.

Activity Page

The activity pages are written so that at a quick glance, you can see:

1. Topic of the activity
2. Whether the activity is better as a one-on-one or as a whole group activity
3. Time required to complete the activity
4. Necessary materials
5. How to set up the activity
6. Detailed directions to conduct the activity
7. Discussion topics to focus and reinforce the purpose of the activity
8. Specific questions to guide the youth’s thinking and processing

Checklist Page

Following each set of activity pages, is a Checklist page. After completing the activities, use this page to evaluate the progress your youth is making on a particular asset. Mentally answer the questions. If the youth is not ready to move on to the next objective, additional activity and resource suggestions are included.

Handouts

At the end of each set of activities are related activity sheets or handouts. Make as many copies of this material as you need.

CARING

ASSET #26

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

OBJECTIVES

The youth will:

	PAGE
Identify what it means to be a caring person.	Activity 1 Self-Evaluation 6
	Activity 2 Move in the Right Direction 8
Recognize and increase awareness of opportunities for helping other people.	Activity 1 A Picture Is worth a Thousand Words 10
	Activity 2 This “Needs” Your Attention 11
Plan and implement projects to demonstrate the importance of helping other people.	Activity 1 Caring Coupons 13
	Activity 2 Caring Community 14

Self-Evaluation

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will identify what it means to be a caring person.

Materials

- Caring Self-Evaluation Form for each youth
- Pencils

Activity (1-2 hours)

- Explain to the youth that “caring” is concern for the well-being of others. It is not just a way of feeling; it’s a way of behaving! Have youth share their interpretations of the definition. After the discussion, have each youth complete the Caring Self-Evaluation Form. Emphasize that their responses will only be shared on a voluntary basis. Give the youth ample time to complete and reflect on their responses.

Discuss

- Share which statements in the self-evaluation were hardest to answer. Why?
- Now that the youth have completed the self-evaluation, have them expand on the original definition of caring.

Ask

- To what extent do you go out of your way to help another person?
- How does it make you feel when you help another person?
- Why are we sometimes uncaring?

Self-Evaluation

	Never	Sometimes	Always
1. I treat people with kindness.			
2. I am generous with others.			
3. I give of myself to help others.			
4. I feel guilty if I pass up an opportunity to help others.			
5. I am concerned about others' feelings.			
6. I put others' needs ahead of my own.			
7. I am sensitive to others' needs.			
8. When I do for others, I don't expect anything in return.			

Move in the Right Direction

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will identify what it means to be a caring person.

Materials

- Blackboard or poster paper
- Chalk or markers

Activity (1-2 hours)

- Divide poster/chalkboard into two columns. Label the first column “Uncaring” and the second column “Caring”. Brainstorm and record actions that would represent each category. In a perfect world, there would not be an “Uncaring” column. Determine what efforts would be necessary to move the “Uncaring” actions to the “Caring” column.

Discuss

- Sometimes it takes more effort to be “Uncaring” than “Caring.” Explain.
- Debate the following statement: By performing caring acts, we become caring people.

Ask

- Was it difficult to determine efforts necessary to move “Uncaring” actions into the “Caring” column? Why or why not?
- What are some of the consequences if your actions remain in the “Uncaring” column?
- Can you choose to be a caring person, or do you have to be born that way?

Caring

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

After completing activities 1 and 2, is the youth ready to move on?

1. Is the youth aware that caring is a way of behaving?	YES	NO
2. Has the youth completed the self-evaluation?	YES	NO
3. Has the youth broadened his/her definition of caring?	YES	NO
4. Has the youth identified the feeling associated with being a caring person?	YES	NO
5. Has the youth identified consequences of being a caring person? An uncaring person?	YES	NO

If you answered “yes” to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the follow-up questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- Create a recipe including essential ingredients with amounts to make up a caring person. Give step-by-step directions on how to properly combine ingredients for a successful recipe.

Follow-Up Questions

- Do you think there are more caring or uncaring people in the world? Why?
- Is age a factor in whether or not you are caring or uncaring?

Additional Resources

- www.goodcharacter.com
- “Caring,” In search of Character video series, produced by Character Counts.

A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will recognize and increase awareness of opportunities for helping other people.

Materials

- Variety of magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Construction paper
- Markers (optional)

Activity (45 minutes)

- Distribute supplies to the group. Have the youth find pictures of ways people help others. Encourage them to find examples in a variety of settings. Make one big collage of their findings.

Discuss

- Looking at the collage, have the youth explain the need that was present in order for the caring action to take place.
- Identify examples of helping others that you hadn't previously considered.

Ask

- What is your favorite picture on the collage? Why?
- What are some other ways of helping people that are not represented on the collage?
- Do you have any family situations that present unique opportunities for helping others? For example, a disabled sibling, family business, aging grandparent, etc. If so, explain.

This “Needs” Your Attention

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will recognize and increase awareness of opportunities for helping other people.

Materials

- Paper and pencils

Activity (45 minutes)

- Imagine that you have just inherited \$50,000! You want to spend it all to help other people. However, there are a couple of guidelines you must follow: 1. Up to \$10,000 may be spent on your immediate family; 2. At least \$40,000 must be spent on the needs in your community.
- In order to effectively accomplish this, you must first identify opportunities for helping other people. Gather ideas from your family, neighbors, and community leaders. Make your list and then prioritize it. Decide which of these opportunities you would like to fund. Don't overspend!

Discuss

- Explain how you determined what would be at the top of your list, and at the bottom of your list.
- “Money Isn't Everything!” Tell how some needs in your community aren't satisfied by money.

Ask

- How did you collect additional ideas for your list?
- Are your priorities the same as someone else's? Why or why not?
- Did all of the ideas for helping others cost money? If not, what was needed?

Caring

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

After completing activities 1 and 2, is the youth ready to move on?

1. Did the youth produce a collage representing caring actions?	YES	NO
2. Did the youth identify a variety of ways to help other people?	YES	NO
3. Can the youth identify some of the needs in his/her community?	YES	NO
4. Was the youth able to list ways to help the community without using money?	YES	NO
5. Did the youth get input from others when identifying community needs?	YES	NO

If you answered “yes” to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the follow-up questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- Identify some community and personal needs by looking in the local newspaper.
- By browsing through the Yellow Pages in the telephone directory, identify the need(s) which brought about the service being provided.

Follow-Up Questions

- How did the perspectives differ among the community members you questioned?
- Is the number of services available in a community reflective of the degree of need? Explain.

Additional Resources

- Anderson, Hans Christian, *The Little Match Girl*, Houghton Mifflin, 1968

Caring Coupons

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will plan and implement projects to demonstrate the importance of helping other people.

Materials

- Construction or drawing paper
- Pencils/pens/markers/crayons
- Scissors
- Stapler

Activity (30 minutes)

- Helping other people is important, not only with our family, but throughout our community. A coupon book is a fun way of showing people how much you care. The coupon book or individual coupons may be given as a gift (Mother's Day, birthdays, Christmas, etc.) or "just because."
- To get ideas for your "Caring Coupons," brainstorm some acts of kindness you could do for others. Make sure to include family, friends, and community members. After getting ideas from each other, create your own "Caring Coupon" page/s and personalize to your own situations. Cut out the coupons and staple together.

Discuss

- Discuss the meaning of this quote from Kahlil Gibran: "You give little when you give of your possessions. It's when you give of yourself that you truly give."
- Debate the value of giving a coupon versus giving something of monetary value.

Ask

- Would you rather give or receive a coupon? Why?
- How does caring affect the quality of your character?
- We have the power within to make this a more caring world. How could this be accomplished?

Caring Community

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

Objective

The youth will plan and implement projects to demonstrate the importance of helping other people.

Materials

- Paper and pencils

Activity

(Planning: 1 hour minimum; Implementation: Several days or weeks)

- Service projects can make a big difference when implemented within your community. Long-lasting relationships, increased awareness, and long-term effects are just some of the benefits of being involved in a project.
- Our assignment is to plan and carry out a service project. As a team, investigate some of the needs in your community. You may need to interview an overall community leaders and agencies. After gathering information, focus on one need. Make a detailed plan that describes each step for successful implementation. Have fun carrying out your plan!

Discuss

- Discuss the impact a teenager could make in their community.
- Some teenagers believe that it is unpopular/awkward to be a caring person. Elaborate.

Ask

- What are some of the benefits you will gain from implementing your service project?
- Can just one person make a difference in the community?
- In what ways do your community show it cares about people? Identify some agencies and groups whose main purpose is to help people.

Caring

GOAL: The youth will place high value on helping other people.

After completing activities 1 and 2, is the youth ready to move on?

1. Has the youth identified acts of kindness they could do for others?	YES	NO
2. Does the youth acknowledge the power of giving of themselves?	YES	NO
3. Has the youth experienced the feelings associated with giving?	YES	NO
4. Does the youth believe it is not popular to be a caring person?	YES	NO
5. Has the youth successfully carried out a community service project?	YES	NO

If you answered “yes” to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the follow-up questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- Contact the United Way and local volunteer center, 4-H clubs or church groups, etc. to get involved in a community service project.
- Volunteer your time at a local food bank, Deseret Industries, Habitat for Humanity, Good Will, community event, or a place of your choice.

Follow-Up Questions

- “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” is a golden rule accepted around the world. What would the world look like if this were truly implemented worldwide?
- “Actions speak louder than words.” Explain.
- Explain the difference between “selfish” and “selfless.”

Additional Resources

- The Good Samaritan, Hurlbut.
- <http://www.caringeducation.net>



Utah's Youth and Families with Promise Program (YFP) is designed to address youth problems through early intervention with at-risk youth, ages 10-14, and their families. YFP is a mentoring program designed to reduce and prevent delinquent behavior. The program addresses three goals:

- 1) improve academic performance
- 2) increase interpersonal competence
- 3) strengthen family bonds.



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