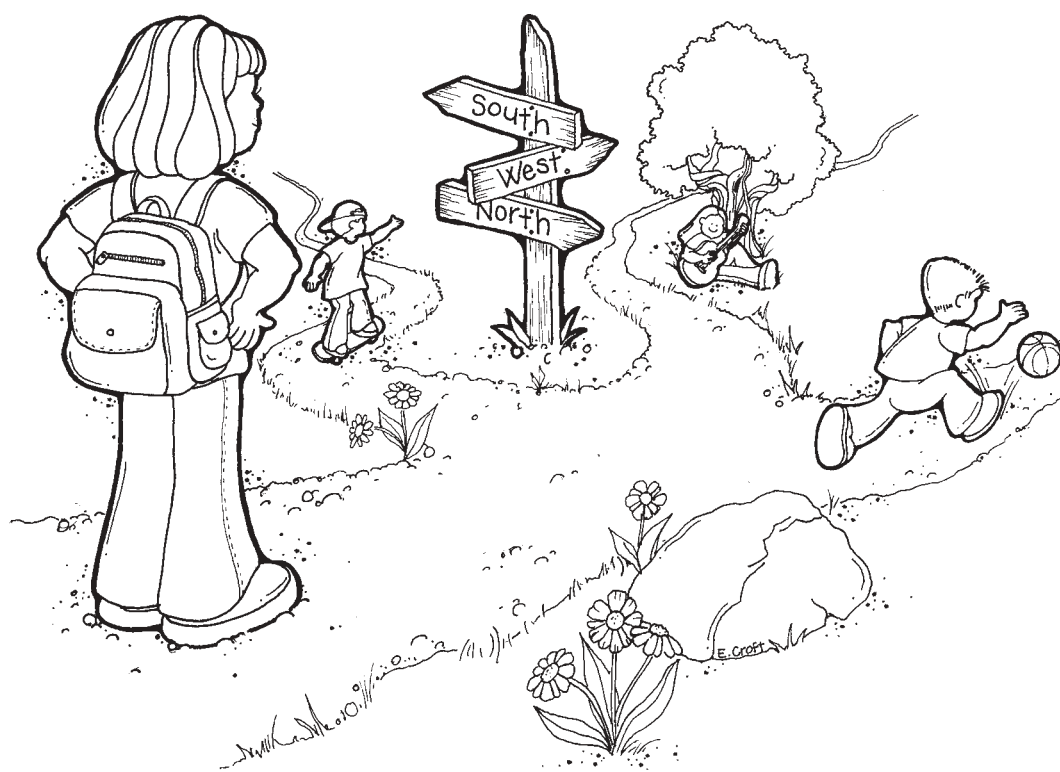


PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

CONNECT!



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

TO STRENGTHEN ASSETS

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CONNECT! LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN ASSETS

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*The worksheet masters included on white paper at the back of the binder may be reproduced for use by participants in an educational setting to accompany and enhance the activities included in this publication.

CONNECT!... Platt, Pappas, Serfustini, Riggs

Introduction

The CONNECT! LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN ASSETS curriculum is based on 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 two million mentors by the year 2000.

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!... was developed out of this need.

CONNECT!... 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 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!... is a readily available, concrete set of materials and activities that can be prepared and used quickly. CONNECT!... will help mentors effectively meet the individual needs of each youth.



Using This Book: To The Mentor

Each of the eight booklets in this binder is dedicated to one of the "40 Developmental Assets" as identified by the Search Institute. The booklets 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 booklet is self-contained and can be removed from the binder 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 overall goal, that a youth will have if and when he or she possesses 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.
(This is indicated by the two-people graphic or the group graphic).
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 back of the binder you will find a master set of all the materials listed in the booklets to be copied for the youth. Make as many copies of this material as you need for your youth.

Note: Thank-you for taking the time to be a mentor and make a difference in someone's life.

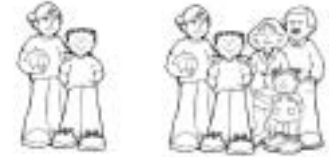
PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

ASSET #32

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

Objectives

The youth will:		Page	
1.	Recognize the importance of planning ahead and will develop a personal schedule (age appropriate time line and detail).	<u>Activity 1</u> Penny Drop or Not	1
		<u>Activity 2</u> To Do. . . .Plan	3
2.	Understand the importance of setting goals (short to long-range) and will make a personal list of goals.	<u>Activity 1</u> A Balancing Act	11
		<u>Activity 2</u> Can You Get Where You're Going?	15
3.	Realize that everyday choices determine progress toward achieving personal goals and will demonstrate the ability to make decisions that relate to their goals.	<u>Activity 1</u> Choosey	21
		<u>Activity 2</u> Pick Up Straws	23



Penny Drop or Not. . . The World According to Newton

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will recognize the importance of planning ahead and will develop a personal schedule (age-appropriate time line and detail).

Materials

- ▶ 5 - 20 coins for each participant
- ▶ copy of the To Do List for youth
- ▶ a plastic ruler
- ▶ pen/pencil



**15-20
Minutes**

Set Up

- ▶ Practice a few times so you know you can do it.

Activity

- ▶ Give each youth a stack of coins. Tell them that you want them to toss all the coins in the air and then catch them in one hand. Let youth try to do it for a few minutes. Line up 10 pennies in a row on the plastic ruler. Place the ruler on your forearm with your palm facing upward and your arm horizontal. Swing your arm rapidly downward and catch the pennies in the air. (Your hand moves very quickly and exerts a force on the ruler, making it move forward from under the pennies.) Let the youth try again. They will be surprised how many they can catch.

Activity Cont.

- ▶ While this may look like a trick, there are actually some very logical reasons behind what is happening. If someone wants to do something, it is important to plan the best way to do it.

Discuss

- ▶ What happened when you first tried to catch the pennies?
- ▶ What happened when you knew the "trick" to catching the pennies?
- ▶ What are some things in your life that you want to accomplish?

Ask

- ▶ Have the youth make a list on the "To Do List" paper of things that they would like to do tomorrow.

TO DO LIST:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TO DO LIST:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.





To Do.....Plan!

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will recognize the importance of planning ahead and will develop a personal schedule (age-appropriate time line and detail).

Materials

- ▶ 2 sheets of blank paper
- ▶ Weekly calendar
- ▶ Monthly calendar



**15-20
Minutes**

Set Up

- ▶ Make copies of the calendars.

Activity

- ▶ Talk out loud about what you have to do in the next week. On a blank sheet of paper, have the youth help you write down your schedule. Make sure that you include "fun" things that you have planned or that you want to do, and relaxing or "down" time activities. Then repeat this by having the youth talk about his/ her activities for the next week. Write down some of the activities and assignments that he/she has for the coming week. Give the youth a copy of the Weekly calendar. Help the youth write each of the items on the Weekly calendar.

Discuss

- ▶ Talk about how important it is for you to schedule your time, so that you can do some of the things you want to do (including spending time with him/her).

Ask

- ▶ How do you think seeing a plan of your week will help you?
- ▶ Who is someone that you think is very organized?
- ▶ How much scheduling do you think they do?
- ▶ When you look at your weekly plan, can you see some time that you can do some of the things you want to do and some of the things you have to do?
- ▶ How will this weekly schedule help you as a person?

Activity Cont.

- ▶ Give the youth a copy of the Monthly calendar and help him/her fill out as much as he/she can. Include activities that you have planned with the youth or can schedule during the month. Have the youth watch you write down the date and the subject of your activity together. If you have more time, get on the internet with the youth and have them look up different types of calendars. End the activity by reminding him/her about some of the activities that you will be doing together.

Week of

Month

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

MONTH _____

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

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

1. Can the youth list things that he/she has to do in a day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Does the youth have the weekly calendar filled out and can they follow it?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Does the youth have a monthly calendar filled out with activities and assignments ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Is the youth willing to plan and schedule future activities and school assignments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Does the youth indicate that he/she can see how planning would help them?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If you answered "yes" to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the summary questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- ▶ Visit an office supply store. Look at the different types of planners and calendars (both paper and electronic planners).
- ▶ On the computer, find planners and calendars included with current loaded software packages. Print a sample schedule or calendar.
- ▶ Have the youth schedule time with one of his/her teachers and ask to see the lesson plans the teacher has to make to get ready for school.
- ▶ Visit a fitness center and have someone show the youth how they help people set personal goals for weight lifting or getting in shape.
- ▶ Go to any business or professional office and see their schedules.

Summary Questions

- ▶ How would we be like pennies just thrown in the air without planning?
- ▶ What difference can planning make?
- ▶ Can people save time in doing things if they plan first? Why?
- ▶ What difference can planning make in your life? In the lives of your family?

Additional Resources

- ▶ The Franklin Planner: Middle SchoolThe Major Tool for School. Ages 12-15 Available through Franklin Covey Corporation.
- ▶ There are many software programs available on planning and goal setting. Calendar Creator, Lotus, Microsoft, and Corel and Palm Corporations all have calendars and planning suggestions available.



A Balancing Act

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will understand the importance of setting goals (short to long-range), and will make a personal list of goals.

Materials

- ▶ broom (one with a regular straw head)
- ▶ yardstick
- ▶ unsharpened pencil
- ▶ a piece of clay large enough to make a 1 1/2" to 2" ball
- ▶ blank piece of paper



20
Minutes

Set Up

- ▶ Practice with each of the objects before you meet with the youth. Have the broom, the yardstick and the pencil laying on the floor in front of you. Keep the clay out of sight.

Activity

- ▶ Tell the youth that you want to have a small contest. Ask him/her to balance any of the three objects on a finger for longer than 3 seconds. Start with the pencil. Let the youth try. After a few attempts, have the youth try to balance the yardstick. Next, give the youth the broom, and tell him/her to hold it upside down in the palm of their hand. Then tell the youth to keep watching the head of the broom and see how long it will balance. After a few tries, tell the youth to try to balance it without watching the head of the broom.

Activity Cont.

- ▶ The broom will fall quite quickly. Have the youth try to balance the pencil again. This time, make a ball with the clay and stick it down on top of the pencil. (The opposite end you have on your finger.)

Ask

- ▶ Did you think that it would be easier to balance the pencil than the broom?
- ▶ Why did putting the clay on the end of the pencil make it balance better?

Discuss

- ▶ Balancing the broom and the pencil with the clay is like what we do in our life when we set goals. A goal is something you want to **do** or achieve in your life, something you want to **have** in your life, or something you want to **be** in your life.
- ▶ All of us have things we want to do, or have, or be. Share several of your goals. Include a long-range and a short-term goal. Tell the youth of a goal you set when you were his/her age and achieved. Have the youth share something he/she would like to do, or have, or be some time in life.

Ask

- ▶ Do you believe that you can **do**, or **have** those "things" in your life?

Activity Cont.

- ▶ Most people think about a lot of things they would like to **do**, or **have**, or **be** but they never accomplish or get them. The biggest reason is they don't understand or have not put into words a reason "why" they want to **do**, **be** or **have** that thing.

Activity Cont.

- ▶ Have the youth list a couple of the goals they identified above and help them write a reason for that goal.

Discuss

- ▶ Putting a reason to our goals, is like having that heavy object on top of the broom or the pencil. It helps us focus on the goal, because it becomes more important to us. We understand why that goal is something we want to work toward.

Ask

- ▶ Do you know anyone you have read or studied about, that set a goal and then accomplished it?
- ▶ Would you tell me about that person?
- ▶ What were the reasons for their goal?

My Goals

What I want to Have	
Why do I want it?	
List 2 things I will have to do to get it.	1. 2.

What I want to Do	
Why do I want to do it?	
List 2 things I will have to do to accomplish it.	1. 2.

What I want to Be	
Why do I want to be it?	
List 2 things I will have to do to become this.	1. 2.



Can You Get Where You're Going?

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will understand the importance of setting goals (short to long-range), and will make a personal list of goals.

Materials

- ▶ road map
- ▶ blank piece of paper
- ▶ colored pencils or pens
- ▶ ruler



10-20
Minutes

Set Up

- ▶ Get a road map of the United States or make a copy of the map included.

Activity

- ▶ Ask the youth if he/she could go anywhere in the continental United States, where it would be. Look at the map and help the youth find that place. Look at some other places and talk about some of the places you have been. Help the youth find where you are right now. Tell the youth you are going to plan a trip together to somewhere he/she wants to go. Have the youth place his/her finger on the destination place and you put your finger on the place you are now. Measure the distance between the two places with the ruler.

Activity Cont.

- ▶ Fold the blank paper in half, lengthwise. Unfold the paper. At the top of one column have the youth write "Directions." On the top of the other column, write "Needs." Have the youth trace the roads and write in the column the roads that you will need to take to get to the destination. Next, have the youth help you make a list of all the things that both of you will need to take in the "Needs" column.

Discuss

- ▶ Planning is important if anyone really wants to go on a trip like this.
- ▶ Talk about some of the goals that the youth identified in the "Balancing Act" activity.

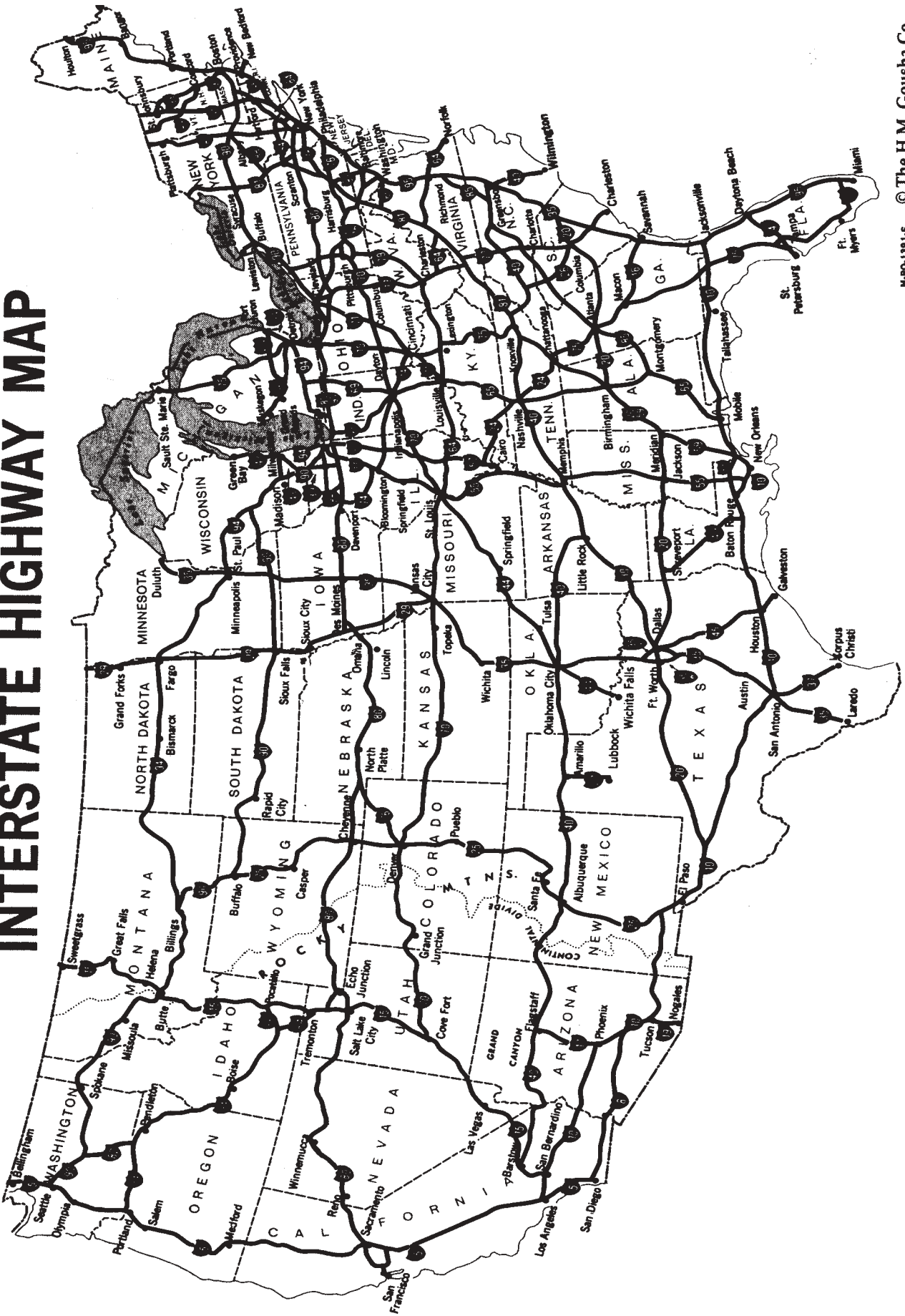
Activity Cont.

- ▶ On the back of the paper, have the youth write "Goals" and "Tasks" at the top of the columns. Help the youth write a couple of their goals and then identify and list some of the "tasks" that he/she will have to accomplish to reach the goal.
- ▶ Setting goals is like going on a road trip. You have to know where you are going, and you have to know what you have to do to get there. All of this takes planning.

Ask

- ▶ If you really want to go to the place that we traced on the map, what will you have to do to be able to get there?
- ▶ How is a "destination" on a road map like a goal in your life?

INTERSTATE HIGHWAY MAP



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PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

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

1. Does the youth know the difference between just scheduling something that is due and something that they want in life?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Can the youth identify successful people who have achieved something in their lives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Can the youth identify some of the tasks they had to do to achieve that goal?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Does the youth have both a long-term and a short-term goal that he/she has expressed verbally?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Has the youth listed some of the reasons/tasks that they will have to do to accomplish these goals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If you answered "yes" to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the summary questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- ▶ Watch a movie about a famous person in history who accomplished something in their life. (Some suggestions with age recommendations:)
 - Huckleberry Finn (6 and up)
 - My Fair Lady (6 and up)
 - Anne of Green Gables (6 and up)
 - The Red Badge of Courage (10 and up)
 - A Bug's Life (6 and up)
 - The Gods Must Be Crazy (6 and up)
 - The Jackie Robinson Story (6 and up)
 - Angels in the Outfield (6 and up)
 - The Miracle Worker (6 and up)
 - Mulan (6 and up)
 - Brian's Song (10 and up)

Activities Cont.

- ▶ Go with the youth to interview someone who is successful. Ask what goals were set in order to achieve what they have now accomplished.

Summary Questions

- ▶ How is remembering or thinking about your goals in life like keeping your eye on the broom?
- ▶ How important is it to have long term goals (or dreams)?
- ▶ What would life be like if no one had any dreams?
- ▶ How do you think your life will be better if you write down your goals and the reasons for setting them?

Additional Resources

- Websites to visit for excellent help on Goal Setting:
- ▶ Mind Tools: Helping you to think your way to an excellent life!
<http://www.psychwww.com/mtsite/goaleffc.html>
 - ▶ Mind Tools: Goal Setting
<http://www.mindtools.com/pggoalst.html>
 - ▶ Mind Tools: Deciding Your Goals
<http://mindtools.com/pgdcgoal.html>
 - ▶ Tutoring Handbook
<http://www.spa3.k12.sc.us/21st/TutoringHandbook.htm>



Choosey

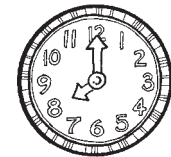
Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will realize that every day choices determine progress toward achieving personal goals and will demonstrate the ability to make decisions that relate back to their goals.

Materials

- ▶ 10 toothpicks



15-30
Minutes

Set Up

- ▶ Put the toothpicks on a table or on the floor between both of you.

Activity

- ▶ Explain that you are going to play a game. The rules are: 1) Two players play. 2) At each move, a player can take one or two toothpicks. 3) The player who takes the last toothpick(s) wins. Play several games with the youth and tell him/her that he/she is to find or figure out a winning strategy. (A winning strategy for a game is a plan for one player to win no matter what the other player does.) *HINT: It may include insisiting on starting first(or second), or what to do at each move.* Play the game until the youth figures out a winning strategy and have him/her explain why their strategy will always work. (Hint: If it is your turn and there are 5 left, you must take 2. If it is your turn and there are 4 left, you must take 1.)

Discuss

- ▶ If your goal is to win at this game every time, then you have to figure out a way to do it. Each time it is your turn, you have to decide whether you should take one or two toothpick(s). What you decide to do depends on the strategy that you figured out.

Ask

- ▶ Why do people play games?
- ▶ What kind of feeling do you get when you win at something?
- ▶ Can you name some famous people who are good at winning? Examples: athletes, politicians, musicians, etc.
- ▶ Do you think they had a goal of winning in that event before they won?
- ▶ Before they won, what were some of the decisions they made to be able to win?
- ▶ What is a goal you have set in your life? (Try to get the youth to remember some goals he/she listed in previous activities.)
- ▶ Can you name some of the decisions you will have to make in order to get closer to achieving that goal?



Pick-up Straws

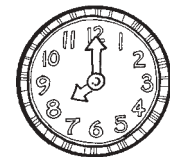
Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

OBJECTIVE

- ▶ The youth will realize that everyday choices determine progress toward achieving personal goals and will demonstrate the ability to make decisions that relate back to their goals.

Materials

- ▶ 20 to 30 straws (Fast food stores are usually very good about giving you straws. Take the youth with you to get them.)
- ▶ scissors
- ▶ paper
- ▶ tape
- ▶ 2 copies of My Goals (see page 14)



**30
Minutes**

Set Up

- ▶ Cut straws into three different lengths: short, medium, and long. Gather them together and wrap a piece of paper around them. Tape the paper together to form a cylinder with the straws inside. Tap the straws on a flat surface so all the ends are even with the edge of the paper. Turn the cylinder over so you cannot see the uneven side. Only the even side is facing you and the youth.

Activity

- ▶ Take turns pulling straws out of the cylinder. Pull a straw up only about 1 inch and then stop. The player that just pulled the straw up must now say if the straw is short, medium, or long. If the guess is right, the player keeps the straw. If the guess is wrong the straw is put back. The next player then takes a turn. If he/she can remember where the replaced straw is, he/she can pull it out. After five turns, count the straws. If there is a tie, the one with the most long straws wins.

Discuss

- ▶ Many people compare life to a game. Discuss the difference in making life either a game of strategy or a game of chance. Talk to the youth about your decisions to study for a test or to go to college. Using these examples or others, ask the youth what decisions must be made for the following people to become what they wanted to be:
 - A Family Doctor
 - A Mechanic
 - A Dancer
 - A Wife/Husband
 - A Worker at a fast-food restaurant

Ask

- ▶ What kind of work would you like to do for a living?
What do you need to do this year to get closer to that goal? In 2 years? In 5 years? In 10 years?

Activity Cont.

- ▶ Give the youth the goal sheet to fill out, while you fill out one for yourself. Tell the youth you will put yours in a place that you can see and refer to often. Ask the youth to do the same.

PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: The youth knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

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

1. Can the youth distinguish between games of chance and games of strategy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Can the youth explain why some people compare life to a game?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Can the youth talk about some of the dreams that he/she has?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Has the youth set 1 or more goals that he/she wants to achieve in life?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Has the youth identified some of the decisions that he/she will have to make in order to achieve a goal(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If you answered "yes" to at least 4 of the 5 questions, you are ready to move on to the summary questions. Otherwise, continue with the activities listed below.

More Activities

- ▶ This objective is supported by many "game" type activities. Help the youth understand thinking and setting strategies to win. Some other good games to play:
 - Tic Tac Toe
 - Checkers
 - Chinese Checkers
 - Dominoes
 - Abalone (A board game available in most game stores that is quick to learn and excellent to teach strategy and thinking skills.)

Activities Cont.

- ▶ Games to play continued:
Chess (If you or the youth doesn't know how to play, learn how. This is one of the best activities for teaching decisions and strategy.) A good set is, The Kids Chess Set by Harvy Kidder. It contains the chess pieces, a book that is user friendly, and a board showing the directions each piece can move.
Most sports games
- ▶ Compare any of these games to games based on "chance" only, like Old Maid, or Fish.

Summary Questions

- ▶ What are the differences between things that you "have to do" and things that you "want to do"?
- ▶ Why is it important to write your goals down and read them often?
- ▶ What is the most important thing I can do today to work toward achieving my goal of _____? (Have youth choose one goal.)—next week? --next month? next year?

Additional Resources

- ▶ Games Magazine, The Big Book of Games; (Workman Publishing, NY).
- ▶ Children's Traditional Games: Games from 137 Countries and Cultures by Judy Sierra and Robert Kaminski. (Oryx Press, 1995).
- ▶ What do you Stand For? By Barbara Lewis (Free Spirit Publishing).
- ▶ A few of the good websites for games that help build strategy skills:
<http://www.aimsedu.org> (The AIMS Education Website)
<http://funbrain.com>
http://gameskidsplay.net/print_version/



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 two level mentoring program (young-adult individual mentors and grandparent-age mentor couples) designed to reduce and prevent delinquent behavior. The program addresses three goals: 1) improve academic performance; 2) increase interpersonal competence; and 3) strengthen family bonds.



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