

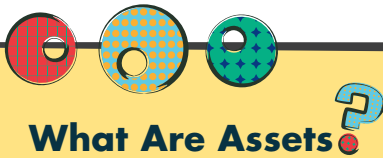


# Ideas for Educators

42 Ready-to-Use Newsletters for School Success

## 26. CARING

Young person places high value on helping others.



### What Are Assets?

Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed. **Caring** is one of six positive-values assets.

50% of youth surveyed have this asset in their lives.\*

\*Based on Search Institute surveys of 148,189 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States in 2003.

- Teach kids how to define who they care about, why they care, and how they can help.
- Guide them through understanding the advantages of caring for others.
- Make caring something that is enjoyable and fulfilling.

### Learning to Care

We usually assume caring is a fundamental part of human existence, but we forget that the quality of caring is developed and nurtured only with time and positive reinforcement.

We can provide opportunities to talk about and act on the caring instincts of our students. Engage

students individually and as a class in discussions about people and things they care about. Find out what issues are important to them. When students are allowed to share who they care about, the act of taking care of those people becomes genuine and energetic.

Once students are ready to take action, teach them ways to help that are truly *helpful*. Teach them to ask questions and listen to the people they want to help. Show them how to evaluate situations and offer aid where it is needed. Remember too that altruistic acts always produce a greater feeling of self-worth in the person who has done them. Encourage reluctant students to understand that it is empowering to care about others.



### Hearing the Call

Pause for a moment and reflect on the policies, attitudes, and practices of your school and classroom. Identify areas where caring for others is the primary goal of your work. Now think about the following questions:

- What specific elements of your school day give you the opportunity to connect with young people and colleagues and care for them?

- ◉ When do you feel most connected to the caregiving aspects of your work, and when do you feel the most apart from them?
- ◉ How do you show colleagues and students that you care for them?

Teaching, like many professions, can be a calling: a calling to the service of others and the improvement of the world around us. The closer your daily practice is to fulfilling those inner callings, the more satisfying your work will be.

