

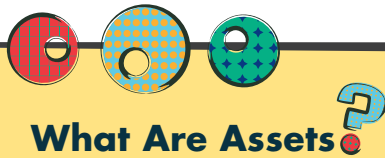


# Ideas for Educators

42 Ready-to-Use Newsletters for School Success

## 7. COMMUNITY VALUES YOUTH

Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.



### What Are Assets?

Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed.

**Community values youth** is one of four empowerment assets.

22% 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.

- Create a forum for students to respond to school issues.
- Get students involved in larger community issues.
- Allow time for discussion of real-life issues and current ideas.
- Invite expressions of opinion, even if they're unpopular.

### Valuing Students

If students are treated like thoughtful people, they tend to rise to the occasion and act like thoughtful people.

How do school communities create spaces for students to feel valued—and therefore empowered?

The primary focus is on simple daily interactions. Kids are perceptive: they can spot insincerity miles off. So be genuine in your interactions with kids:

- Model respect by making eye contact and listening attentively.
- Invite comments on a current issue and listen to opinions.
- Enjoy getting to know your students' unique personalities.
- When students complain, listen even if you disagree.

Invite students to participate more fully in their own environment by creating appropriate forums for students to express ideas, opinions, or solutions to issues facing your school. Structure classroom or school-wide debates with clear rules of engagement. Make sure the topic is one of real interest to students. Also make sure speakers and opinions are respected, even if they're unpopular. Again, make it clear that you are inviting them to participate in structuring their own environment.



### Valuing Teachers

What does it mean to feel value? How do you experience this in your professional life? Just as you

provide opportunities for students to feel valued, your school can show the value it places on its teachers.

- ⦿ When making decisions in your school, involve the people who are going to be affected by the outcome.
- ⦿ When there are conflicts and problems within the school, give the people affected by the issues central roles in the problem-solving discussions.
- ⦿ Ask questions. Often. Daily. When people are asked for their input into the conditions that affect them, they feel valued and useful.

- ⦿ Celebrate success. Don't let good work go unnoticed. If the school doesn't do it, make sure you do it with your own immediate colleagues.
- ⦿ Recognize and respond to the personal successes, struggles, and milestones of staff as well as the professional ones.
- ⦿ Welcome new colleagues in a way that reflects their importance to the school and to you. When colleagues leave, let them know how important they've been to you.

