

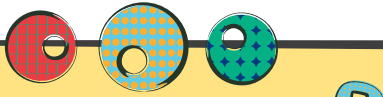


Ideas for Educators

42 Ready-to-Use Newsletters for School Success

19. RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Young person spends one hour or more per week in activities in a religious institution.



What Are Assets?

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

Religious community is one of four constructive-use-of-time assets.

58% 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.

- Give support instead of directing.
- Use this as a source of encouragement for students and parents to communicate with each other.
- Get kids thinking about issues larger than themselves.

Another Kind of Community

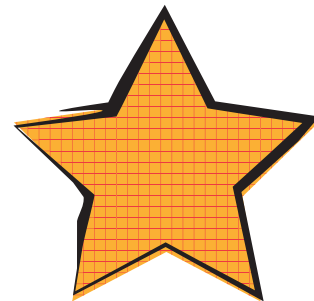
This asset isn't about a particular religion, but an understanding that students are surrounded by neighborhoods, schools, civic communities, and family—and that religious communities are part of this framework for most kids.

How can you support this asset? First of all, be an equal-opportunity supporter. If you go easy

on homework on the nights that some students have yeshiva or madrasa, make sure you are also respectful of when Bible study occurs. Make sure none of your students are penalized for missing school for a specific established religious festival or holiday.

Furthermore, use this asset as a way to encourage better communication between students and families:

- Encourage students to reach out to families for guidance and values.
- Suggest that the home is an important place for providing a foundation of faith and beliefs.
- If a student wants to find out more about a religion other than her own, suggest local religious leaders as a good source of information, and encourage her to keep the lines of communication open with her family, if possible.



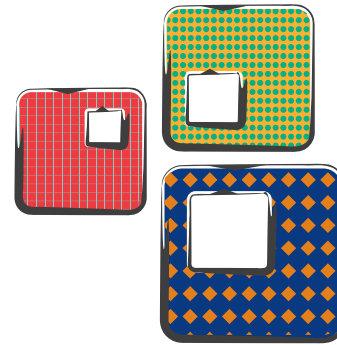
Tread lightly and carefully, and remember the importance of religious community in many students' lives.

Honoring Your Beliefs

This asset highlights the very real need for people to be part of a community that tries to understand its place in a vast world.

For those of you who attend a church, mosque, synagogue, or temple or believe in a particular doctrine, how do these beliefs inform your attitudes and behaviors toward colleagues and students alike? How is it that you are able to act out your faith in a way that connects you to your own values?

For those of you who do not belong to a particular religious tradition, how is it that you too are



able to connect to a larger context and understanding than your own?

And for all of us, how do our own values and beliefs have a safe place to reside in our workplace? As much as we strive to have our youth feel safe and supported in their own religious beliefs, we too owe that to one another.