

Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style!

Practical Suggestions for Building Assets in Your Child

Asset # 29- Honesty

To Build Asset # 29 Parents and Extended Family Can . . .

Build trust so your child feels safe to tell the truth.

— *Anchorage*

Don't lie to your kids, even about little things. Always tell the truth.

— *Fairbanks*

Help your child to be aware of the good feelings that come from being honest.

— *Tenakee*

Understand that kids may lie from time to time, as part of their moral development. If they start to lie or acknowledge that they lied, praise them for being strong enough to correct their mistake. Use it as a learning experience rather than a scolding.

— *Juneau*

Let your children know when you had to struggle to tell the truth to someone. Let them know if you had to back yourself out of a lie, even little white social lies. Discuss those feelings with them.

— *Kotzebue*

Be an "askable parent" so that when your children are confused about something, they will look to you for advice. If the issue is honesty, help them discover the truth and help them prepare an honest response.

— *Juneau*

Traditional Ways to Promote Asset # 29

Tell children the traditional stories about telling the truth.

— *Mekoryuk*

Tell children to always be honest, that honest people are always admired and respected.

— *Holy Cross*

Tell your children the truth about things. Help them see that honesty, while it may not get you what you want right away, is the best idea over a lifetime.

— *Selawik*

Have severe consequences for lying. Young people must see from the people around them that lying is not tolerated.

— *Hoonah*

Asset # 29 — Honesty

Kids tell the truth even when it's not easy.

63% of youth surveyed by Search Institute have this asset in their lives.*

*Based on Search Institute surveys of almost 100,000 6th to 12th grade youth throughout the United States

What are Assets?

Assets are 40 key building blocks to help kids succeed. Like a dream catcher, assets are the supporting threads in a young person's life that can keep away harm and invite goodness.

Words of Encouragement

Youth tells the truth even when it is not easy
Jennifer Loesch

Can you think of a time where telling the truth was difficult for you as an adult? It's probably very difficult at times, now can you imagine how difficult it is for youth?

Youth often feel a lot of pressure in school, mostly related to grades. I remember taking tests that would determine my final grade in the class. There was one case where the teacher missed a wrong answer and if he had marked it wrong it would take me down a letter grade. Even though it was risking a better grade I took it up to him and pointed the mistake out. My teacher didn't deduct the points. He was very impressed with my honesty and rewarded it.

Community members, parents, teachers, pastors and other adults can encourage youth to be honest by leading by example. Let youth see you being honest. Perhaps you are in a situation where it would be much easier to not tell the truth, but what kind of example would that be to people watching you? Another way to encourage honesty is to be a good listener, if youth can trust you, most likely they will be honest with you. Show youth that you honestly care about them and talk about the tough decisions that they have to make.

The youth in our communities today are the leaders of tomorrow. We can all think of some dishonest leaders that we know. Let's encourage the youth in our communities to be honest and lead by example, just as we do.

Research

When youth tell the truth, even when it is not easy, they are more likely to be resilient and resist negative behaviors. Some other benefits that result in being honest are;

- Higher grades and math and reading scores (Hanson & Ginsburg, 1988; Rosenthal & Feldman, 1991; Wentzel, 1991)
- Higher perceived scholastic competence, less worry about school (Johnson, 1993)
- Less drug use (Barnea, Teichman, & Rahav, 1992; and others)
- Less affiliation with deviant friends (Whitbeck, Simons, Conger, & Lorenz, 1989)
- Greater overall well-being (Moore & Gleib, 1995)

Quotes:

"No legacy is so rich as honesty."

-William Shakespeare

"Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom."

-Thomas Jefferson

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