
THE WORLD ACCORDING TO OUR KIDS, 2015

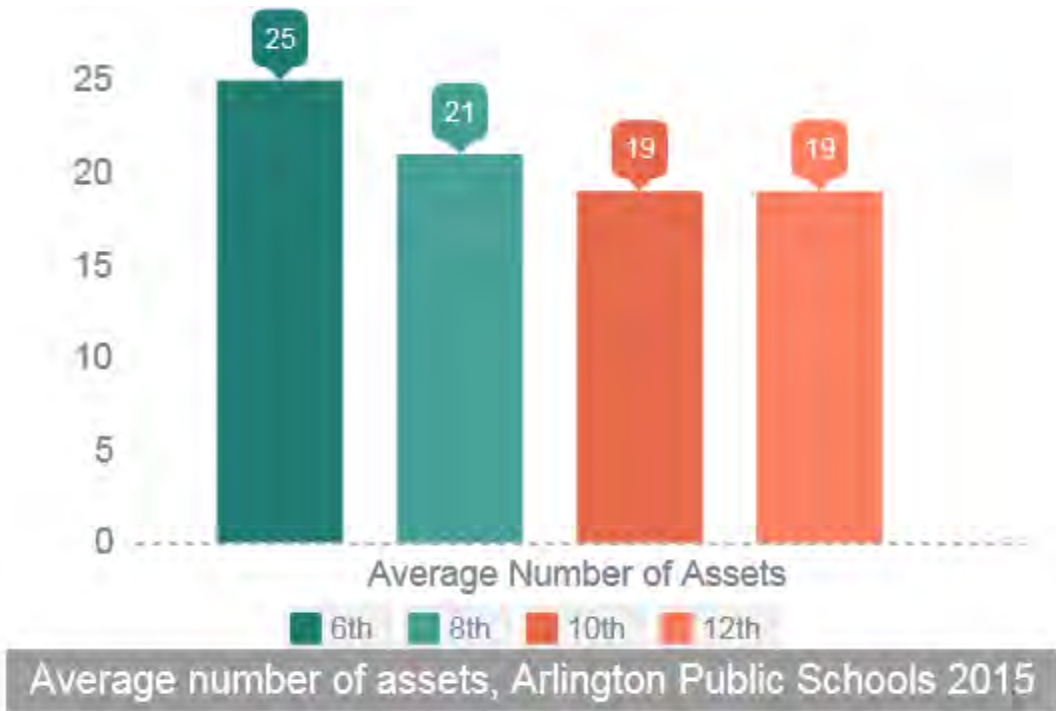
Findings from the 2015 Developmental Assets Survey of Arlington Public School Students



Executive Summary

In the spring of 2015, 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th graders in Arlington Public Schools responded to the Developmental Assets Surveys.

Five hundred and seventy-two 6th graders and 1,597 8th, 10th and 12th graders responded. Results, along with background information about the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families and the Assets Surveys are contained in the following report.



What is the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families (APCYF)?

- ⇒ The Partnership is an advisory group made up of 16 citizens and eight senior School and County staff who work with youth.
- ⇒ The Partnership makes recommendations to the County and School Boards on how to improve the health, well-being and safety of children, youth, and families in the community.
- ⇒ The Partnership collects and analyzes survey data from young people enrolled in Arlington's public middle and high schools to give county decision makers and the community reliable and comprehensive information on the needs, characteristics, and behaviors of young people.
- ⇒ Much of the Partnership's work has been guided by the Developmental Assets framework that emerged from research by Search Institute to identify the "building blocks" that all children need to become healthy, caring, and responsible adults.

What are the Developmental Assets Surveys?

- ⇒ The Me and My World survey (administered to APS 6th graders) and the Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors (administered to APS 8th, 10th and 12th graders) have been developed by the Search Institute and are collectively referred to as the Developmental Assets surveys.
- ⇒ They examine external and internal assets across the following domains:



What are the Developmental Assets?

WHAT ASSETS ARE:



Assets are **POSITIVE!** They focus on **supports vs. deficits**



The **MORE ASSETS** young people have, the more likely they are to make **HEALTHY CHOICES!**



We build Assets through the **RELATIONSHIPS & ENVIRONMENT** we create



Just **8%** of Arlington youth report the **ideal** number of Assets (31-40)

They are 40 positive opportunities, experiences, skills, values and relationships. The assets were identified by Search Institute using research on why some young people, even faced with the same adverse circumstances, thrive. Developmental Assets

promote positive outcomes, cushion the impact of negative influences such as poverty on children's lives, and allow young people to thrive, rather than merely survive. In contrast, the lack of Developmental Assets is associated with behaviors, such as repeated alcohol use and violence, which can jeopardize the health, safety, or development of youth.

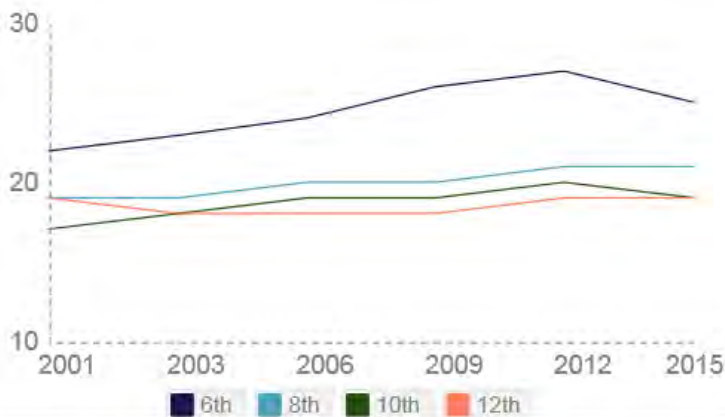
The Assets are examined as internal and external. The internal Assets reflect the values and competencies that young people need to be self-regulating adults. The external Assets reflect the support and concern young people receive in their families, their neighborhoods, and in school.

Young people with 31 or more Developmental Assets are far more likely to make good choices, avoid risk behaviors, take on leadership roles, and adopt a healthy lifestyle. In Arlington the average number of Assets reported in 6th grade is **25** and that declines as the kids age with an average of **19** reported in 12th grade. For context, in 2011, the national average (26 communities reporting) for 8th-12th grade was **20** Assets.

For more information about Developmental Assets, to request a workshop or obtain a brochure, contact Michael Swisher, Assets Liaison, at (703) 228-1671.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the average number of assets for 8th-12th graders has increased from 18.3 in 2001 to 19.7 in 2015.



It is important to note that the survey instrument has changed subtly over time and those changes are seen primarily in the survey administered to 6th graders. Beginning in 2009 *the Me and My World* survey was administered, which was not used in 2001-2006. Therefore, it is possible that some increase in the 6th grade assets can be attributed to that change. However, it is clear that over time 6th graders have consistently had a higher number of assets, while 10th and 12th graders have been slightly lower.

Full results for 2012 and 2015 can be found in the table on the following two pages. However, those tables do not show differences by gender. A few assets with notable differences across gender include the following:

	Male	Female
Do at least one hour of homework on school nights	61%	77%
It is important to promote equality and reduce hunger and poverty.	59%	74%
It is important to help others.	58%	69%
Report feeling safe at home, school and in the neighborhood.	64%	41%
Feel good about themselves.	54%	41%
Care about other's feelings and are good at making and keeping friends.	31%	50%

2012 & 2015 Developmental Assets Results, 6th Graders

Complete asset definitions can be found in Appendix A

External Assets

		N=575 2012	N=572 2015
SUPPORT			
1.	FAMILY SUPPORT	83%	84%
2.	POSITIVE FAMILY COMMUNICATION	56%	56%
3.	OTHER ADULT RELATIONSHIPS	56%	51%
4.	CARING NEIGHBORHOOD	52%	49%
5.	CARING SCHOOL CLIMATE	58%	55%
6.	PARENT(S) or CAREGIVER(S) INVOLVED IN SCHOOL	49%	44%
EMPOWERMENT			
7.	COMMUNITY VALUES YOUTH	33%	27%
8.	YOUTH AS RESOURCES	51%	46%
9.	SERVICE TO OTHERS	46%	37%
10.	FEELS SAFE IN COMMUNITY	74%	74%
BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS			
11.	FAMILY BOUNDARIES	57%	55%
12.	SCHOOL BOUNDARIES	86%	82%
13.	NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES	53%	46%
14.	ADULT ROLE MODELS	59%	52%
15.	POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE	86%	91%
16.	HIGH EXPECTATIONS	89%	88%
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME			
17.	CREATIVE ACTIVITIES	71%	61%
18.	YOUTH PROGRAMS	64%	64%
19.	RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY	57%	52%
20.	TIME AT HOME	27%	24%

2012 & 2015 Developmental Assets Results, 8th, 10th and 12th Graders

Complete asset definitions can be found in Appendix A

External Assets

		N=1,651 2012	N=1,597 2015
SUPPORT			
1.	FAMILY SUPPORT	70%	70%
2.	POSITIVE FAMILY COMMUNICATION	32%	29%
3.	OTHER ADULT RELATIONSHIPS	50%	45%
4.	CARING NEIGHBORHOOD	36%	35%
5.	CARING SCHOOL CLIMATE	36%	35%
6.	PARENT(S) or CAREGIVER(S) INVOLVED IN SCHOOL	24%	23%
EMPOWERMENT			
7.	COMMUNITY VALUES YOUTH	22%	20%
8.	YOUTH AS RESOURCES	32%	28%
9.	SERVICE TO OTHERS	49%	50%
10.	FEELS SAFE IN COMMUNITY	53%	52%
BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS			
11.	FAMILY BOUNDARIES	40%	39%
12.	SCHOOL BOUNDARIES	47%	49%
13.	NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES	42%	43%
14.	ADULT ROLE MODELS	31%	32%
15.	POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE	61%	70%
16.	HIGH EXPECTATIONS	55%	52%
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME			
17.	CREATIVE ACTIVITIES	22%	18%
18.	YOUTH PROGRAMS	65%	64%
19.	RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY	46%	46%
20.	TIME AT HOME	61%	70%

2012 & 2015 Developmental Assets Results, 6th Graders

Complete asset definitions can be found in Appendix A

Internal Assets

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

	2012	2015
21. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION	76%	72%
22. LEARNING ENGAGEMENT	48%	38%
23. HOMEWORK	76%	75%
24. BONDING TO ADULTS AT SCHOOL	68%	63%
25. READING FOR PLEASURE	62%	48%

POSITIVE VALUES

	2012	2015
26. CARING	90%	88%
27. EQUALITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE	82%	79%
28. INTEGRITY	88%	84%
29. HONESTY	89%	88%
30. RESPONSIBILITY	85%	84%
31. HEALTHY LIFESTYLE	82%	82%

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

	2012	2015
32. PLANNING & DECISION-MAKING	52%	48%
33. INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE	52%	48%
34. CULTURAL COMPETENCE	78%	73%
35. RESISTANCE SKILLS	77%	76%
36. PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION	70%	69%

POSITIVE IDENTITY

	2012	2015
37. PERSONAL POWER	62%	56%
38. SELF-ESTEEM	70%	63%
39. SENSE OF PURPOSE	52%	49%
40. POSITIVE VIEW OF FUTURE	67%	60%

2012 & 2015 Developmental Assets Results, 8th, 10th and 12th Graders

Complete asset definitions can be found in Appendix A

Internal Assets

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

	2012	2015
21. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION	71%	73%
22. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT	60%	58%
23. HOMEWORK	66%	69%
24. BONDING TO SCHOOL	60%	60%
25. READING FOR PLEASURE	28%	23%

POSITIVE VALUES

	2012	2015
26. CARING	55%	63%
27. EQUALITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE	62%	66%
28. INTEGRITY	74%	76%
29. HONESTY	65%	66%
30. RESPONSIBILITY	66%	64%
31. RESTRAINT	38%	40%

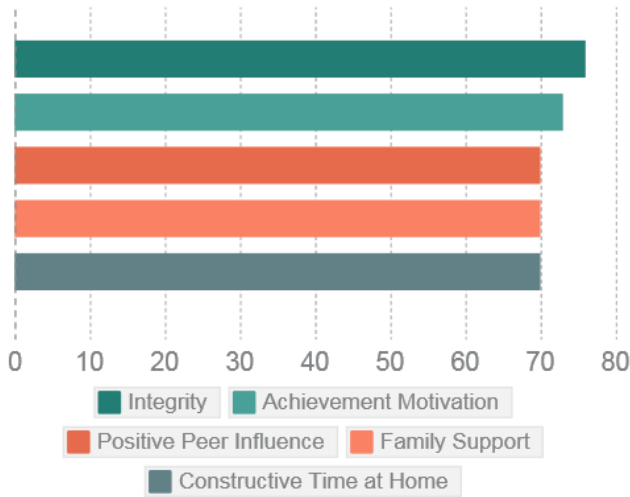
SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

	2012	2015
32. PLANNING & DECISION-MAKING	34%	34%
33. INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE	46%	40%
34. CULTURAL COMPETENCE	54%	53%
35. RESISTANCE SKILLS	44%	46%
36. PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION	46%	53%

POSITIVE IDENTITY

	2012	2015
37. PERSONAL POWER	49%	42%
38. SELF-ESTEEM	55%	47%
39. SENSE OF PURPOSE	63%	57%
40. POSITIVE VIEW OF FUTURE	73%	68%

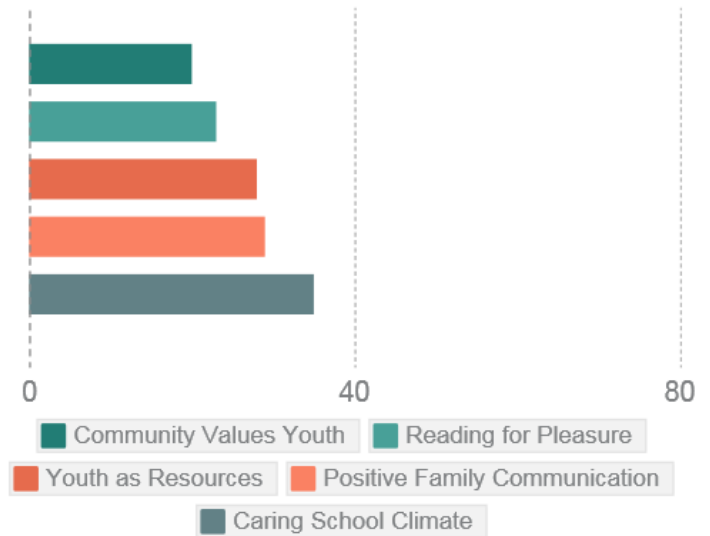
Community Strengths



Support and structure create a solid foundation upon which families and young people can continue to build Developmental Assets. Youth indicate that they possess an intrinsic motivation to work hard and learn, do well in school, and make the 'right' choice. This translates into positive influence by, and on, their peers.

Areas for Focus

The areas for focus are centered primarily around relationships between youth and adults. By providing greater opportunities for youth to be heard and take on leadership in the community, we can build off of the strengths and talents that youth already possess, and help them develop in other areas. Changes need to come from adults across the community. At an individual level, by building positive, supportive relationships with teens. That would need to be accompanied by structural changes: allowing greater youth input and influence at home, in schools, and other community organizations.



Additional Resources

- **Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families** (www.apcyf.org) Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Families identifies community needs through research and surveys; engage the community to find ways to meet the needs, and advocate for improved policies and programs.
 - **Asset Resources** (<http://www.apcyf.org/practical-resources-for-building-assets/>)
- **Search Institute** (www.search-institute.org) For more than 50 years, Search Institute® has been a leader and partner for organizations around the world in discovering what kids need to succeed. Our research, resources, and expertise help our partners in organizations, schools, and community coalitions solve critical challenges in the lives of young people.
 - **Sparks and Thriving** (<http://www.search-institute.org/sparks>)
- **ParentFurther** (www.parentfurther.com) ParentFurther is an online resource to help families strengthen relationships through shared activities. Family relationships provide the foundation from which young people can develop the motivation and skills to overcome challenges and thrive.
- **Arlington Teens** (<http://www.arlingtonteens.com/>) Arlingtonteens.com is by and for teens (ages 13-19) in Arlington, Va. It is intended as a safe place on the Internet for teens to express themselves, get information and connect.