



Asset of the Month

December Asset Category: Social Competencies (Internal Asset)

December's Asset: #36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution

In a healthy community, a young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

(40% of youth surveyed believe that they have this asset in their lives.)

What youth say about Social Competencies: “Be open to the possibilities of people.” “Teach acceptance and respect, and we won’t have to learn tolerance.”

Peaceful Conflict Resolution:

Whether it’s a spat between sisters over who should take out the trash or an argument between nations over natural resources, disagreements are a part of being human. But no matter how small or large, every dispute can be resolved peacefully if both sides are willing to listen and compromise. Encourage young people to talk it out – and truly listen to one another. Speaking and listening respectfully are key.

Research shows that young people who resolve conflicts peacefully do better in school, have higher self-esteem, and are less likely to use alcohol and other substances. It is normal for anyone to feel mad every now and then, but learning to keep cool helps people express anger more effectively.

Tips for building this asset:

When you notice two young people arguing, ask them to stop and take a deep breath. Once they’re calmer, ask them to think about why they are mad before they start talking. Being calm helps to focus on the problem at hand and not on attacking the other person. Suggest they talk about problems before the problems get too big. This can help keep everyone from blowing things out of proportion.

- Talk to your child about a conflict you had as a young person. Discuss how you handled the situation then and how you might approach it now.
- Model peaceful conflict resolution in your own life. Remember, when you argue in public, whether it’s in a grocery store or on a bus, there’s a good chance young people are listening. What do you want them to hear?
- Help young people resolve conflicts when they arise by following these steps:
 - a. State what he or she wants without blaming others.
 - b. Listen and try to understand each other.
 - c. Stay focused on the conflict at hand – don’t bring up other conflicts.
 - d. Emphasize creative problem solving and new solutions.
 - e. Negotiate a win-win result. The non-violent resolution of conflict means devoting energy to the joint search for a solution; both sides can together attack the problem, instead of one side attacking the other.

Other Ways to Peaceful Conflict Resolution

- Address conflict early and meet it head on: Catching conflict before it gets destructive is important.
- Set goals for resolving a conflict: Sometimes finding common ground can take time, but don’t let it drag on. Give parties involved a deadline for solving a conflict and give them consequences for not meeting the deadline.
- Be honest about concerns: Share your concerns and fears and let people know what the consequences of this conflict are likely to be if it continues.
- Empathize with all sides: Life is full of gray areas, and rarely is there a strict black-and-white, right-or-wrong perspective. Put yourself in the other person’s shoes to understand their anxiety. Then you can help figure out a resolution.
- Communicate frequently: Keep the conversation going. Talk through whatever is distressing people and

- Agree to disagree: Encourage respect for differences and let people know they don't have to agree with each other to find a solution.
- Let people in conflict create their own solution: Guide them, give them insight, and provide a safe outlet for working through a conflict, but don't solve it for them.
- Discuss differences openly: Take some of the anxiety out of differences by talking about them openly and often. Secrets lead to fear, and fear leads to anxiety and conflict.

Family Discussion Topic/Activity:

Role play, tell stories, and/or discuss a TV show where there was a conflict. Discuss the situation and how it was handled by those in conflict. Here are some questions to guide these discussions:

- What ways did those in conflict use to try and solve the conflict?
- What are some other ways to resolve the conflict and what are the potential different results?
- When can conflicts be solved peacefully? When is force or violence needed?
- What steps can you take to resolve conflict peacefully?
- What conflicts do you have at home, neighborhood, school?
- When do you seek help in resolving a conflict?

* Visit <http://www.familyresourcesheboygan.org>. Learn more about caring and the other 39 assets. This website also lists other great websites for parents, youth group leaders, teachers, etc. with tools, handouts, etc.

December Events

- Saturday, Dec. 19 – Sheboygan South Boys Basketball teams will be bell ringers all day for the Salvation Army at Wal-Mart South.
- Holiday Toy Drive: 6 - 8:30pm December 11, 2009 Sheboygan South Field House: Sheboygan South Redwings vs. Manitowoc Bring a new toy in its original package which will then be donated to area underprivileged kids
- **Winter Wonderland**
Families are welcome to attend one of two sessions of the *Family Resource Center's* Winter Wonderland. Each session will feature crafts, music, snacks, and photos, by appointment, with or without Santa Claus.
When: Wednesday December 2, Session 1: 5-6pm, Session 2: 6:30-7:30pm
Where: Plymouth Art Center, 520 E. Mill St Plymouth
Cost: \$7.00 per family which includes one photo mailed to your home (additional photos \$6.00)
Registration Required! Call (920) 892-6706
- Monday, Dec. 21 – **World Peace Day**
- ***Please forward this information to co-workers, clients, families, and other contacts.**

*Please respond with feedback, ideas for upcoming assets of the month, etc., or if your organization would like to be listed as a resource to: ysports@sheboygancountymca.org or erikfrc@excel.net . Also contact us if your organization would like a 40-asset presentation or training.

***Next Month's Asset of the Month:** Category: Constructive Use of Time #17. Creative Activities. If your organization has a potential asset building event or information you would like to share for the January 2010 "Asset of the Month" notice please respond by the 20th of December.

***Upcoming months:** February category: Positive Identity - #38. Self Esteem. March category: Commitment to Learning - #23. Homework

The Asset of the Month is a campaign is an effort under the Healthy Community/ Healthy Youth Initiative:

Sponsored by: Van Horn Automotive Group and Kohler Credit Union.

