



Asset of the Month

September Asset Category: Commitment to Learning (External Asset)

September Asset: #21. Achievement Motivation

In a healthy community a young person is motivated to do well in school.

(65% Of youth surveyed believe that they have this asset in their lives.)

What youth say about Commitment to Learning: “Feed my interests.” “Make school more like a community.” “Be excited about your subject.”

Commitment to Learning is a commitment to growing – When we learn something new, we grow, change, and expand our horizons. This is true whether one is age 2, 14, or 60. The commitment-to-learning assets are built for children and youth through adults’ attitudes, encouragement, involvement, and modeling. Young people look to their teachers, parents, and neighbors to learn new information, ideas, and perspectives. There are practical ways everyone can encourage learning:

- **Model curiosity and discovery.** A commitment to learning is contagious. Adults can inspire young people to learn, focusing on why education is important, how it has shaped their lives, and how it can be fun, stimulating, and rewarding. Young people can inspire adults and children to explore new topics, ideas, and issues.
- **Make learning relevant.** Young people benefit from seeing how learning applies to working and to life. If you have a job, volunteer in a school to talk about how your work or career has ties to schoolwork.
- **Highlight learning beyond the classroom.** Learning happens in many different places – in homes, nature, community centers, congregations, workplaces, and parks. Help young people discover the joy of learning in all that they do by asking questions, helping them dig for information, and sharing in their excitement about new information.

Parenting Tips & How-to-live the Asset of the Month:

Ages Birth – 5

- Give safe and interesting things to babies and toddlers to look at and touch, such as household objects or toys in different colors, shapes, and sizes.
- Sing and read to babies, toddlers, and preschoolers daily.
- Expose toddlers and preschoolers to new environments, such as parks and stores.
- Make a game for children to learn names of objects.

Ages 6 – 11

- Set a place to do homework, and set daily homework guidelines.
- Let children read to you every day as they learn to read. Celebrate their first reading!

Ages 12 – 18

- Find creative ways to link personal interests with school subjects. Discover the historical roots of rock, hip-hop, or jazz music for a history project.
- Contribute to collections that strengthen learning.
- Help teenagers think about their goals and the education and discipline required to reach them.
- Place more emphasis on lifelong learning rather than focusing only on graduation.
- Do things that use different parts of the brain and ways of learning. Comment on progress when you see someone (adult or youth) gaining new insights or being able to think in new ways.

- **Family Discussion Topic/Activity:** Ideas: 1) Make a big deal of the first day of the new school year – make a tradition of going out for the evening meal and talk about the day, their classes/schedule, and what

youth are excited about; what youth are worried about; setting goals for the year, etc (let the kids do most of the talking). 2)Have a neighborhood book swap once a month or every other month. 3)Daily - discuss a current event in the city, state, nation, and/or world – ask youth what their opinion or thoughts are about these events.

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

September Events

- **National Grandparents Day** – Sunday, Sept. 13th. What a great way to build the commitment to learning by spending a day with grandparents and asking them questions about “the good ole days”.
- **Discover Nature with Little Hands** at Camp Y-Koda. Open to ages 2 – 4 with parent. Thursdays (9:30 – 11am) Sept. 15, 22, 29. Perfect for this month’s asset. Call Camp Y-Koda (467-6882 or www.sheboygancountyyymca.org) for more information on September’s session or other up coming nature sessions.
- **Fallapalooza Family Day** at Camp Anokijig on September 20 from 9:30am – 3pm. Camp activities include boating on Little Elkhart Lake, giant Voyageur canoe rides, kids horse rides, archery, fishing, face painting, crafts. Special events include an arrowhead dig, carnival games, and an archery contest with the winners awarded a week at Camp! Adults (age 13 +) \$9; Kids (ages 4-12) \$6; Kids (ages 3 and under) Free. For more information: Camp Anokijig 920-893-0782 or www.anokijig.com.
- **America on the move week** – September 20 – 27. Free information at the Sheboygan YMCA or the Sheboygan Falls YMCA - on how to get started, log steps/miles during the week and start a more active lifestyle. End the week with the **Sheboygan County Health and Fitness Day (9/26/09)**. Go to www.americaonthemove.org.
- **Family Event Series – at Camp Y-Koda:** September 26, 9:30 – 11:30am. Canoeing – Meet at the Sheboygan County Marsh. Open to families or individuals. Next month features geocaching at Kohler Andrae State Park. See above for phone and website information.

*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@sheboygancountyyymca.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: Support #6. Parent Involvement in schooling. If your organization has a potential asset building event or information you would like to share for the October “Asset of the Month” notice please respond by the 20th of September.

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