

SUPPORT

External Assets



RAISING HIGHLY
**CAPABLE
KIDS™**

#1 FAMILY SUPPORT

Family life provides high levels of love and support.

Action:

- ◆ Start family traditions.
- ◆ Give each of your kids a hug today
- ◆ Spend time each week with each of your kids individually.
- ◆ Create a small memory, memory box, or photo album for each of your children.

#2 POSITIVE FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Young person and his/her parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.

Action:

- ◆ Eat meals together.
- ◆ Stay connected with long-distance relatives through email, phone calls, letters, sending artwork from kids, etc.
- ◆ Have a whiteboard on your refrigerator or in a common area. Use it to write loving/positive messages to one another or to let everyone know where you are and how you can be reached and when you will be home.

#3 OTHER ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.

Action:

- ◆ Find a buddy to cook with—cook brownies, cookies, or other treats.
- ◆ Send cards or email greetings to young people for holidays, birthdays, and other milestones.
- ◆ Plant a garden or create a container garden with potted plants.
- ◆ Look for those who are already in the lives of your child to see who might be a good mentor

#4 CARING NEIGHBOR

Young person experiences caring neighbors.

Action:

- ◆ Have neighborhood celebration on the first or last day of the school year. Invite youth, parents, teachers, and other neighbors.
- ◆ Organize informal activities (such as basketball games, etc.) for the youth in your neighborhood.
- ◆ If you live in an apartment, spend time in gathering places, such as courtyards, meeting rooms, pools, and lobbies. Greet people and try to start conversations.
- ◆ Let kids in your neighborhood know they can play basketball in your driveway, etc (as far as is comfortable for you to offer)
- ◆ Organize a neighborhood bake sale or garage sale or barter day to get neighbors together to trade items.

#5 CARING SCHOOL CLIMATE

School provides a caring, encouraging environment.

Action:

- ◆ If you find out your child is bullying or being bullied, don't add stress by showing your anger, fear, or disappointment. First, listen carefully and respectfully while your child explains his or her point of view.
- ◆ Then, work together to make a plan to solve the problem.
- ◆ Talk with your kids---ask about their friends, about what it's like to ride the bus or walk through the lunchroom. Keep talking and asking questions, even when they don't seem anxious to respond. If you know or find out that bullying is going on at your school, in a congregation, or another organization, be sure to report it.

#6 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.

Action:

- ◆ Ask your student what they are studying in school.
- ◆ Set times and spaces that are quiet and free from distraction, so that your child can have a place to study.
- ◆ Study with your child if he/she is having a test.
- ◆ Communicate with teachers frequently; set up parent conferences before school begins and throughout the school year to communicate about your child's success and progress.
- ◆ Send emails to teachers at the beginning of the year letting teachers know you are interested in your child's success and behaviors.
- ◆ Let teachers know that you will support them (the teacher) as well as your student in their journey through school.
- ◆ Communicate with teacher that you have high expectations for your student and that you want to work together, as a team, to help your student have success.

EMPOWERMENT

External Assets



#7 COMMUNITY VALUES YOUTH

Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.

Action:

- ◆ When young workers at a grocery store, drug store, or fast food restaurant wait on you, greet them in a friendly manner and compliment them on something and give them encouragement (work ethic, smile, etc)
- ◆ Be patient with young workers! Don't show irritation if they make a mistake.
- ◆ Celebrate a young employee's new job with a lunch date and tour of your workplace. Talk about your job and the job he or she has been hired to do. Encourage lots of questions.

#8 YOUTH AS RESOURCES

Young people are given useful roles in the community.

Action:

- ◆ If you are on a decision-making board that affects young people, invite young people to be members—and really listen to what they have to say.
- ◆ If you are in charge of a fundraising or charity event, involve your children or students. Give them a meaningful task to complete for the project.
- ◆ Encourage kids to mentor their peers. Teach them how they can help other youth by listening to them and helping them work through their problems.

#9 SERVICE TO OTHERS

Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.

Action:

- ◆ Together with your kids, do something for someone else, whether it's making a financial contribution, baking cookies, or helping someone out.
- ◆ Make and send cards to hospitalized children, nursing home residents, or people in the military.
- ◆ Organize a community or neighborhood "closet-cleaning day." Deliver everything you collect to a shelter or thrift store.
- ◆ Provide foster care for a pet through an animal shelter or for a friend or neighbor who is out of town or ill.
- ◆ Organize or participate together in a fundraiser such as a walk or run. Donate the proceeds to a worthy cause.

#10 SAFETY

Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.

Action:

- ◆ Create a loving, violence-free, safe home environment.
- ◆ If weapons are ever part of a bullying threat, take the threat seriously. The police need to be kept informed.
- ◆ Talk with your teen about the connection between driving and emotions. Point out that driving while angry, sad, or preoccupied can be as dangerous as drinking and driving. New drivers need to be in control of their own emotions and alert to the reactions of other drivers.
- ◆ Remove yourself from a situation immediately if you ever feel troubled enough to use physical or emotional violence against your teenager (or younger children). Leave the room---go for a walk, visit a neighbor, call a trusted friend or counselor---but physically go somewhere else and calm down.
- ◆ Parents must decide when a teen's welfare or the welfare of others is seriously endangered, and take action. If your child is engaging in risky behaviors of any sort, it's time to intervene, monitor behavior closely, and perhaps seek professional support.

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

External Assets



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#11 FAMILY BOUNDARIES

Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.

Action:

- ◆ Always ask where your kids are going, with whom, and when they will be home.
- ◆ The next time your child lashes out at you, try responding with love rather than anger, such as, "I'm sorry you're feeling that way right now. I love you, but it's not okay to act this way."
- ◆ Learn to be flexible when setting boundaries and to take the long view. Trends come and go and always will.
- ◆ Invest in high-quality internet software that can track all activity, including chats, email, and Web access. Let your teens know that you will regularly check on what they are doing online and then follow-through.
- ◆ If possible, keep computers in the common areas of your home, not in bedrooms, offices, or other rooms where kids can spend long periods of time unsupervised.

#12 SCHOOL BOUNDARIES

School provides clear rules and consequences.

Action:

- ◆ Make sure you and your children know the school rules about dress and appearance, and know the consequences for violating them.
- ◆ School should feel safe to children. If your child is being teased or bullied---in the classroom, on the playground, or to and from school---be sure to talk to your child's teacher. Great resources are available for teachers and parents to work through bullying issues, so speak up as soon as you believe this is an issue.

#13 NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.

Action:

- ◆ Tell other parents when you see their children being responsible or generous in their actions. Try to find opportunities to praise more often than you report misbehavior.
- ◆ Make your home one that kids want to come to. If kids get rowdy in your home, be calm but firm in re-establishing order.
- ◆ Meet the parents of your children's friends. If your preteen wants to go with friends to a movie or the mall without you, call the other parents and agree on pick-up times and movie choices.

#14 ADULT ROLE MODELS:

Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.

Action:

- ◆ If you parent with a partner, make sure you work on keeping that relationship happy and healthy. You, your partner, and your kids will all benefit.
- ◆ Know when to tell your children you're sorry. Keep it honest and sincere, avoiding the temptation to soothe your own conscience by offering gifts or other indulgences unrelated to the situation.
- ◆ Show them that you are brave enough to try again, even when you feel embarrassed.
- ◆ Make sure children hear adults solving problems in peaceful ways---not with shouting, angry words, or hitting. If you and your child witness bullying or intimidation by adults or children, point it out, talk about it, and think of alternate ways the situation could have been handled.
- ◆ Model hard work, a good attitude, and respect for others to your children. Avoid bad-mouthing co-workers, sports teams or players, and others with whom you compare yourself and compete.

#15 POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE:

Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.

Action:

- ◆ Know what the friends of your children think about school, home, rules, etc.

#16 HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well

Action:

- ◆ Monitor activities and grades
- ◆ Encourage excellence at school, keeping room clean, helping with household chores, and behaviors that build good work ethics---being on time, calling in if unable to go in to work, etc.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

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#17 CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.

Action:

- ◆ Hand down a hobby. Teach a young person a skill, such as quilting, carpentry, or gardening.
- ◆ Help your children---at every age--- find positive outlets for their creative energy. This might include classes, crafts, physical activities, drama, etc. If you have a hobby, share with your children. Let them see how you put your time and heart into it. Invite them to join you.

#18 YOUTH PROGRAMS

Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.

Action:

- ◆ Scouts and other youth groups are great places for young people to build strong, supportive relationships.
- ◆ Suggest that your children join an organization for the summer as a counselor or mentor for children.
- ◆ Encourage your teens to be involved in some out-of-school programs or activities.
- ◆ If you think it would help your child, look into a formal mentoring program through your school or a community organization. This could match kids with adults who will be a supporter and friend for years to come.
- ◆ Encourage young people to participate with organizations that do worldwide fundraising for a cause. Encourage their leadership and participation.

#19 RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY:

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

Action:

- ◆ Adapt your religious and spiritual practices to match your child's developmental abilities. Offer a quiet activity or book to keep child interested and adjust time to match age and attention span.
- ◆ Encourage children to talk about religious questions and concepts, rather than judge them for what they say.
- ◆ Keep talking with and listening to your child, even if he/she says things about religion or spirituality that worry or disappoint you.

#20 TIME AT HOME:

Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights a week.

Action:

- ◆ Make sure your kids' time at home is constructive by setting aside at least one evening a week as family time. Play games, have a family book club, make dinner together, or go on walks, taking a different route each week.
- ◆ Limit their time on TV, computer, video games, and phone.
- ◆ Set aside media-free family time on evenings or weekends. Play games, read aloud together, toast marshmallows (we didn't have a fireplace, so we used a candle), listen to music, play outside, plan an enjoyable outing together—picnics, etc.
- ◆ As much as is possible, honor mealtimes as "connecting times." Don't watch TV or stand over the sink as you eat. Actually sit down and eat together.



#21 ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION

Young person is motivated to do well in school.

Action:

- ◆ You can never “overpraise” a child’s abilities.
- ◆ Use spontaneous rewards with no strings attached. Instead of saying, “I’ll take you to the park if you finish your assignment,” say, “You finished your assignment? Great! Let’s go to the park!”
- ◆ Set goals together that will motivate your child. Choose goals that are easy, simple, and doable.
- ◆ Monitor stress levels—talk to your teenager about how he/she can make the most out of school and the importance of school.

#22 SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

Young person is actively engaged in learning.

Action:

- ◆ Talk with your child about school and learning. Ask them every day what they did in school, what they learned, what they liked about school, what they didn’t like about school. Ask them what their favorite part of the school day was (can’t be lunch/recess/dismissal)
- ◆ If your child complains about being bored in school, talk to the teacher about enriching assignments to make them more challenging.
- ◆ Stay positive when you talk to your child about school. Let your child know that you think learning and school are fun and important.

#23 HOMEWORK

Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.

Action:

- ◆ Make a list of “homework helpers” for your child—neighbors, others who excel in certain subject areas
- ◆ Sit near your child when they’re doing homework, and do work of your own—write a letter, pay bills, balance your checkbook, or read work-related material.
- ◆ Encourage your children to form study groups with other students when appropriate.
- ◆ Provide guidance on homework, don’t give them the answers. Remember, children only need to do their best, not YOUR best.

#24 BONDING TO SCHOOL

Young person cares about his or her school.

Action:

- ◆ If you are able, purchase school t-shirts, caps, etc. Wear these items to show school pride.
- ◆ Participate with your child in service projects, such as food drives, conducted by the school.
- ◆ Join PTA/PTO, attend conferences and special events, and volunteer in any way you can at school (fall festival, dances, picnics, etc.)
- ◆ Identify one caring adult at school as you family’s “ally”.

#25 READING FOR PLEASURE

Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

Action:

- ◆ Look for books at garage sales
- ◆ Take your child to the library
- ◆ Ask your child to read to you as they learn to read
- ◆ Be excited and show them you are proud of their reading
- ◆ Ask a teenager to recommend a favorite book and discuss the character’s values
- ◆ Give your child books and magazine subscriptions as birthday and holiday presents
- ◆ Make it a family ritual to read together in the evening---with no tv, cell phones, or computers

#26 CARING

Young person places high value on helping other people.

Action:

- ◆ Encourage your kids to donate coins---their won or ones you give them—to good causes
- ◆ Look for volunteer opportunities in your community that you and your child can do together, such as stocking food supplies at your local foodbank, etc.
- ◆ Affirm your child when he/she acts in ways that are caring and responsible. Your children need to hear that you're proud of them and that they are making good choices. (even if you aren't totally happy with all of their choices)

#27 EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.

Action:

- ◆ Together, choose an organization or group you want to support financially. Spend six months saving and then deliver your donation in person, if possible.
- ◆ Begin teaching your child the importance of thinking of others who might not have as much as they do.
- ◆ Hand down items they no longer use to charitable organizations.
- ◆ Identify people (past or present) who have worked for social justice. Discuss their impact on their community or the world.

#28 INTEGRITY

Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.

Action:

- ◆ Defending personal values may sometimes mean your teens/children get intolerant or belittling responses from their friends or acquaintances. Your support for your children is crucial.

#29 HONESTY

Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."

Action:

- ◆ Live honestly, even when it's "no big deal". Return the extra if given too much change, play fair, own up to fibs or made-up excuses
- ◆ Make it a game to find dishonesty in advertising. Discuss why companies might want to mislead people or hide some information.
- ◆ When your children are honest with you about problems, concerns, or sensitive topics, praise them, even if you don't like what you have been told. Separate honesty from other issues.
- ◆ Keep in mind that kids usually lie because it seems safer than telling the truth. If you suspect your child is lying, try to get to the reason. Example: "I'm having a hard time believing this story, did something happen that you're afraid to tell me?" Or, "There seems to be more to this than what you're saying, what else is bothering you?"

#30 RESPONSIBILITY

Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.

Action:

- ◆ Don't always bail your kids out of trouble. Help them learn from mistakes.
- ◆ Don't nag or rescue your kids when they forget to follow through on a responsibility.
- ◆ Let natural consequences occur (example: kids who don't put their dirty clothes in the laundry basket run out of clean clothes to wear)
- ◆ Talk about the cost of things you buy and how you make decisions about what to spend.
- ◆ If you have a pet, encourage your child to take on more responsibility for pet care as he/she matures.
- ◆ If your child is interested in getting a pet, work with him/her to do research on the care needed for the type of animal you are considering.

#31 RESTRAINT

Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

Action:

- ◆ Talk with your kids about real-life stuff like drugs, alcohol, and sexuality. Let them know your values and expectations.
- ◆ Talk to your kids (boys and girls) about how to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- ◆ Help your children plan fun, "dry" parties (supervised and without alcohol) at your home or another safe location.
- ◆ Do not glorify the behaviors of people who have had too much to drink, even on TV or in movies.
- ◆ Let your teen know that it's important to you that they don't drink, that you will always provide a no-questions-asked-at-the-time ride home if they end up at a party where there is alcohol.
- ◆ Take time to discuss shows or movies that contain content about sexual relationships (even those considered 'family' shows)

#32 PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING:

Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

Action:

- ◆ When your children receive long-term school assignments, offer to help them plan and make decisions in order to finish on time.
- ◆ Talk children through planning ahead by asking “what if” questions. This will help them think about what needs to be done and identify possible consequences of their decisions.
- ◆ Encourage your teen to get involved in a long-term project (one that involves planning and coordination) at school or in the community.
- ◆ Be intentional about letting kids make plans for a family party or event. Let them help make guest lists, plan the budget, shop for food and decorations, and enlist family members to make the event a success.
- ◆ Provide your child with a daily planner to help them organize their homework assignments, tests, and after-school activities.

#33 INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE:

Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.

Action:

- ◆ Remind your children that they need to treat you with respect, such as saying please and thank you, and acknowledging your presence!
- ◆ Make it a policy to never speak poorly of others in your home.
- ◆ Use “active listening” with your children. Ask good questions, paraphrase what they say to make sure you understand, and show that you empathize with what they are saying.
- ◆ Teach your children—through modeling and explanation—how to use “I” statements to express feelings to one another without making accusations (Ex: “I feel angry when you say that,” instead of “You make me so mad, or “You are so stupid.”)
- ◆ Encourage your child to develop friendships of all ages in a number of different settings—church, faith community, neighborhood, or your extended family.

#34 CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Action:

- ◆ Pay attention to what you say and how you say it about people, the world, ideas, and so on. Your kids are learning from you.
- ◆ Teach your kids that everybody has personal values, and some may be different than theirs.
- ◆ Attend cultural events and festivals in your community
- ◆ Talk about diversity in movies and TV—stereotypes, subtle differences between characters, positive and negative characters were portrayed.
- ◆ Encourage multi-cultural experiences

#35 RESISTANCE SKILLS

Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.

Action:

- ◆ Be aware that some young people participate in unhealthy rites of passage involving things like hazing, gambling, sexual activity, substance use, or other illegal activities.
- ◆ Talk with your child to see how their peers mark life changes.
- ◆ Make a positive plan to celebrate in healthier ways.
- ◆ Talk importance of thinking for oneself. Your child can make positive choices!
- ◆ Reinforce non-violent resistance skills, such as walking away, being assertive, and finding someone such as a trained peer mediator to help.
- ◆ Teach your children that kids who pressure them to do things they know they shouldn't do are not true friends at all. Talk about a time when you had to let an unhealthy friendship go.
- ◆ Brag on your kids when they are making great choices!

#36 PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Action:

- ◆ Forgive people of all ages when they make a mistake.
- ◆ Teach your child how to apologize, explain, negotiate, and resolve conflicts peacefully when relationships are in trouble.
- ◆ Teach your child about nonviolent resistance by reading about Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, and other nonviolent leaders.
- ◆ Know when to tell your kids you're sorry. Keep it honest and sincere, avoiding the temptation to soothe your own conscience by offering gifts or other indulgences unrelated to the situation.
- ◆ Allow family members to leave discussions when they are too angry or upset to resolve conflicts peacefully and reasonably. Agree on a time to try again.

#37 PERSONAL POWER

Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”

Action:

- ◆ Find ways to set important goals and ways to achieve those goals
- ◆ Help your child learn to brainstorm and choose solutions to problems so that he/she learns to be empowered.
- ◆ Team work, a rewarding service activity, or remembering to do chores without being reminded all develop a child’s personal power (self-esteem)
- ◆ Help your child understand the differences between things we can and cannot control—other people’s actions/reactions/choices/words, etc.

#38 SELF-ESTEEM

Young person reports having a high self-esteem.

Action:

- ◆ Talk openly and positively about changes happening in your child’s body—growth spurts, puberty, etc.
- ◆ Tell your children you are proud of them
- ◆ Let them know you enjoy their company
- ◆ When teen acne appears, explore ways in which it can be treated effectively.
- ◆ Tell your kids what’s special about them and that you love them, for them.

#39 SENSE OF PURPOSE

Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”

Action:

- ◆ Stock your bookshelves with inspiring books about heroes who have made a difference with their lives. Maybe even reading books about people like Thomas Edison, JC Penney and others who failed multiple times before they would be considered “inspiring”
- ◆ Tell your children about a time when you really messed up and learned from it.

#40 POSITIVE VIEW OF PERSONAL FUTURE

Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.

Action:

- ◆ Encourage students to visit with high school counselor to read through and discuss careers and college.
- ◆ Talk with your teenager about how they feel about themselves and what they envision for their future.
- ◆ Encourage your child to volunteer at places they are passionate about—ex: if they have a love for animals, volunteer at a shelter or a veterinarian’s office to see if it is a possible career path for them.
- ◆ Ask your kids (even at an early age) about their goals and dreams. Help them dream BIG dreams! Don’t get stuck on the money aspect. Help them explore ways to make it happen.
- ◆ Keep track of all volunteer work in a notebook so that your child can use the information to help secure scholarships post high school.