

THE MARQUETTE AND ALGER COUNTY 2008 YOUTH ASSET REPORT

More information available online: www.soyreport.org

OUR PASSION, OUR PROMISE, OUR PATH

Marquette and Alger counties take their responsibility to the youth of the community seriously. As a way of hearing youth voices, youth in Marquette and Alger counties are surveyed every two years.

In 2008, 1,788 youth in 8th, 10th and 12th grades completed the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes & Behaviors™* survey created by the Search InstituteSM. Since 1997 the survey has been administered six times in all of the middle and high schools.

This year the survey showed that the average number of assets our students possess is 18.9. Below you will also see the most common and the least common assets. It is interesting to note that four of the five most

common assets are "Internal Assets"—qualities that develop in a young person over time. They are the assets that the young person has the most ability to influence in themselves. The five least common assets are all "External Assets." These are relationships and opportunities that young people experience in their families, schools and communities. This indicates there is room for improvement in the environment communities create; the environments in which our youth grow up.

In addition to the asset data, this report presents results of a "Sidebar Survey," created in cooperation with area agencies. It is designed to give us insight into situations of interest on a local level.



This report presents selected data from these surveys to help provide the community with the information it needs about the health of youth and their perceptions about the communities in which they live. More detailed information is available in the State of the Youth (SOY) Report at www.soyreport.org.

2008 MARQUETTE AND ALGER COUNTY YOUTH BY ASSET LEVELS

While there is no "magic number" of assets young people should have, youth with at least half of the 40 Assets are much less prone to risk-taking behavior. Yet, as the chart shows, only 41% of youth in Marquette and Alger counties have 21 or more assets and, perhaps more concerning, 16% of the youth surveyed have 10 or fewer of the 40 Assets.

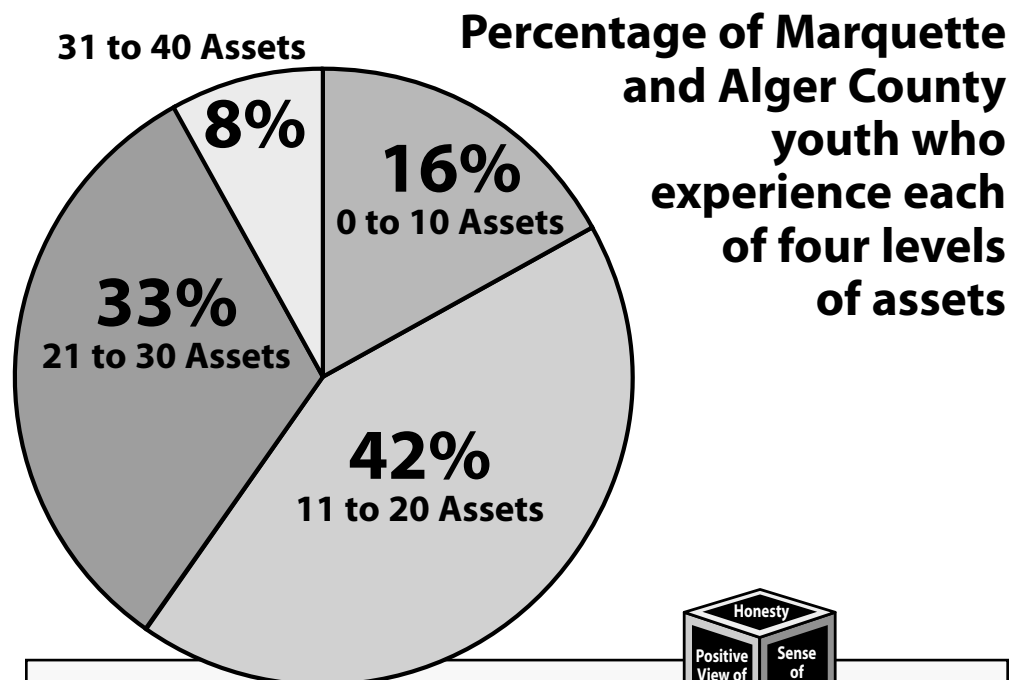
Totals in this report may not equal 100% due to rounding.

MOST COMMON ASSETS

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Positive View of Future | 75% |
| Family Support | 72% |
| Integrity | 69% |
| Honesty | 68% |
| Achievement Motivation | 68% |

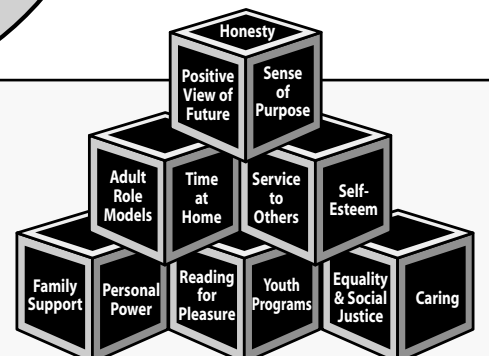
LEAST COMMON ASSETS

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Creative Activities | 18% |
| Community Values Youth | 23% |
| Youth as Resources | 27% |
| Adult Role Models | 28% |
| Positive Family Communication | 28% |



WHAT ARE ASSETS?

They are the strengths, or building blocks, that kids need to grow up healthy, competent and caring. Research tells us youth with more assets experience more success in life and participate in fewer risk-taking behaviors.



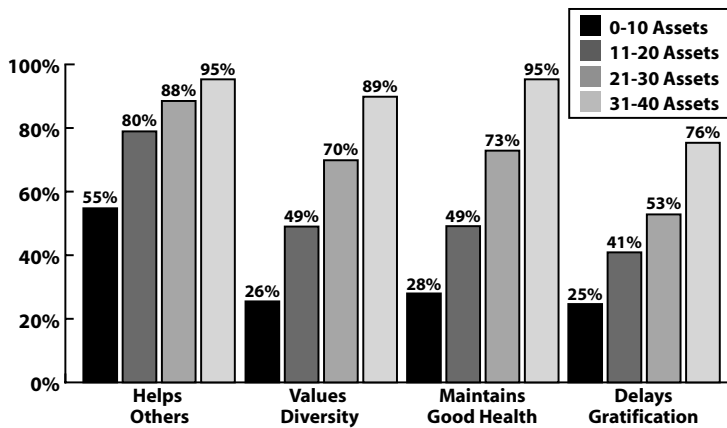
THE POWER OF ASSET BUILDING

Search Institute studies have consistently shown that young people who experience more of the assets engage in fewer risk-taking behaviors and are more likely to report thriving indicators. This means the more assets a young person experiences, the more likely he or she will choose a healthy lifestyle. This has been shown to be true regardless of age, gender, or region of the country.

THE POWER TO PROMOTE

The 2008 Marquette and Alger counties survey results reveal that the more assets youth have, the more likely they are to help friends and neighbors, value diversity, maintain good health and not spend their money quickly. Youth who have more assets are also more likely to be leaders, resist dangerous activities, and not give up when things get difficult.

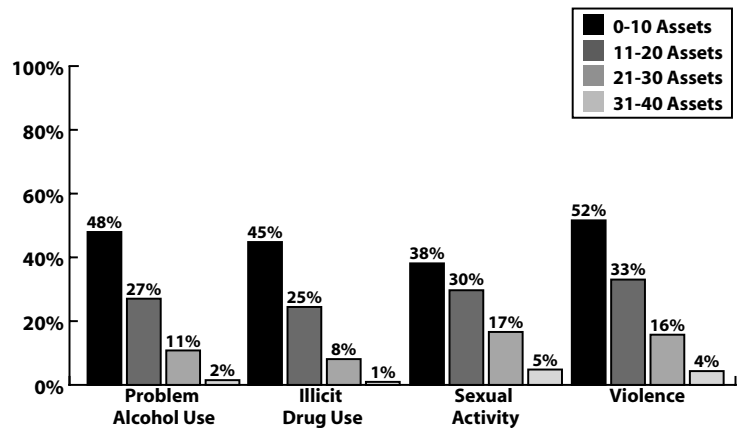
Percentage of Our Youth Reporting these Thriving Indicators in 2008



THE POWER TO PROTECT

The survey results indicate that the more assets youth have, the less likely they are to participate in risk-taking behaviors. As illustrated by these charts, youth with more assets are less likely to be involved in alcohol and illicit drug use, sexual activity and violent behavior.

Percentage of Our Youth Reporting these Risk Behaviors in 2008



PERCENT OF OUR YOUTH REPORTING THRIVING INDICATORS

| Category | Thriving Indicator Definition | Total | Gender | | Grade | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| | | | M | F | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Helps Others | Helps friends or neighbors one or more hours per week | 80% | 76% | 84% | 82% | 78% | 81% |
| Values Diversity | Places high importance on getting to know people of other racial/ethnic groups | 56% | 47% | 64% | 59% | 56% | 52% |
| Maintains Good Health | Pays attention to healthy nutrition and exercise | 57% | 56% | 58% | 63% | 57% | 50% |
| Delays Gratification | Saves money for something special rather than spending it all right away | 45% | 49% | 42% | 47% | 46% | 43% |

PERCENT OF OUR YOUTH REPORTING SUBSTANCE USE RELATED RISK-TAKING BEHAVIORS

| Category | Risk-Taking Behavior Definition | Total | Gender | | Grade | | |
|-------------------|--|-------|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| | | | M | F | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Alcohol | Used alcohol once or more in the last 30 days | 31% | 30% | 31% | 10% | 35% | 47% |
| | Got drunk once or more in the last two weeks | 21% | 23% | 19% | 8% | 21% | 34% |
| Tobacco | Smoked cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days | 18% | 17% | 19% | 9% | 18% | 28% |
| Marijuana | Used marijuana once or more in the last 12 months | 25% | 26% | 24% | 7% | 27% | 42% |
| Other Drug Use | Used other illicit drugs once or more in the last 12 months (Includes cocaine, LSD, PCP or angel dust, heroin, and amphetamines) | 11% | 12% | 10% | 3% | 12% | 18% |
| Driving & Alcohol | Rode (once or more in the last 12 months) with a driver who had been drinking | 37% | 33% | 41% | 32% | 40% | 38% |

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

In Search Institute terms, **assets** are key individual or environmental resources that enable and nurture young people to develop in healthy, positive ways. Percentages are for the 1,788 8th, 10th and 12th grade students in Marquette and Alger counties who were surveyed in 2008.

↑ Assets that have increased by 5% or more since 1997
 ↓ Assets that have decreased by 5% or more since 1997

| Asset Type | Asset Name & Definition | Percentage |
|--|--|------------|
| EXTERNAL ASSETS | SUPPORT | |
| | 1 Family Support – Family life provides high levels of love and support | 72% ↑ |
| | 2 Positive Family Communication – Young person and his or her parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s) | 28% ↑ |
| | 3 Other Adult Relationships – Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults | 48% ↑ |
| | 4 Caring Neighborhood – Young person experiences caring neighbors | 40% |
| | 5 Caring School Climate – School provides a caring, encouraging environment | 30% ↑ |
| | 6 Parent Involvement in Schooling – Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school | 32% ↑ |
| | EMPOWERMENT | |
| | 7 Community Values Youth – Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth | 23% ↑ |
| | 8 Youth as Resources – Young people are given useful roles in the community | 27% |
| | 9 Service to Others – Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week | 49% |
| | 10 Safety – Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood | 57% ↓ |
| | BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS | |
| | 11 Family Boundaries – Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts | 48% ↑ |
| | 12 School Boundaries – School provides clear rules and consequences | 54% ↑ |
| | 13 Neighborhood Boundaries – Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior | 51% ↑ |
| | 14 Adult Role Models – Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior | 28% |
| | 15 Positive Peer Influence – Young person's best friends model responsible behavior | 62% ↑ |
| | 16 High Expectations – Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well | 48% ↑ |
| | CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME | |
| 17 Creative Activities – Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts | 18% | |
| 18 Youth Programs – Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community | 62% | |
| 19 Religious Community – Young person spends one or more hours per week in a religious institution | 44% ↓ | |
| 20 Time at Home – Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week | 42% ↑ | |
| INTERNAL ASSETS | COMMITMENT TO LEARNING | |
| | 21 Achievement Motivation – Young person is motivated to do well in school | 68% ↑ |
| | 22 School Engagement – Young person is actively engaged in learning | 65% |
| | 23 Homework – Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day | 43% |
| | 24 Bonding to School – Young person cares about her or his school | 53% ↑ |
| | 25 Reading for Pleasure – Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week | 29% |
| | POSITIVE VALUES | |
| | 26 Caring – Young person places high value on helping other people | 46% ↑ |
| | 27 Equality and Social Justice – Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty | 47% ↑ |
| | 28 Integrity – Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs | 69% |
| | 29 Honesty – Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy" | 68% ↑ |
| | 30 Responsibility – Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility | 66% |
| | 31 Restraint – Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs | 39% ↑ |
| | SOCIAL COMPETENCIES | |
| | 32 Planning and Decision Making – Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices | 31% |
| | 33 Interpersonal Competence – Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills | 45% |
| | 34 Cultural Competence – Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds | 35% |
| | 35 Resistance Skills – Young person can resist negative peer pressure | 42% ↑ |
| | 36 Peaceful Conflict Resolution – Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently | 42% |
| | POSITIVE IDENTITY | |
| 37 Personal Power – Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me" | 48% | |
| 38 Self-Esteem – Young person reports having a high self-esteem | 50% | |
| 39 Sense of Purpose – Young person reports that "my life has a purpose" | 63% ↑ | |
| 40 Positive View of Personal Future – Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future | 75% ↑ | |

A CALL TO ACTION – FIVE PROMISES COMMUNITY PLANNING

Marquette and Alger counties are proud to have been named one of the *100 Best Communities for Young People* in 2008 for the third time in a row. The national competition, sponsored by America's Promise Alliance, honors communities for outstanding efforts to make young people a priority.

Building upon the information gathered in applying for the three-time designation, the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development led a comprehensive community assessment and planning process to determine how to best ensure that all kids in Marquette and Alger counties receive the Five Promises.

Community-developed strategies for ensuring the Five Promises for young people

1. Caring Adults

- Encourage adults to mentor young people
- Increase adults' awareness of their responsibilities to youth as well as opportunities for them to support youth

2. Safe Places

- Expand and support after-school and summer programs for youth



- Publicize existing online "community calendars" to parents and youth as ways to learn about opportunities that are currently available

3. A Healthy Start

- Advocate for increased physical education, recess and nutrition in schools
- Secure funding and improve collaboration to provide healthy relationship education beginning in elementary schools

4. An Effective Education

- Increase opportunities for parents to be involved in school
- Promote and support enrichment activities in and out of school

5. Opportunities To Help Others

- Promote U.P. 2-1-1, the number to call to find services and opportunities available to youth and families in the Upper Peninsula
- Publicize 1-800-Volunteer.org and encourage organizations to work effectively with youth volunteers

Complete results of the community assessment and planning can be found at www.glycd.org.

SPARKS is a new concept out of the Search Institute that can help you build Developmental Assets in the young people in your life. The Great Lakes Center for Youth Development is using the research on Sparks to help adults build stronger relationships with young people in our communities.



SPARKS are...

the hidden flames in kids that excite them and tap into their true passions.

SPARKS come from...

the gut. They motivate and inspire. They're authentic passions, talents, assets, skills and dreams.

SPARKS can...

ignite a lifelong vocation or career, or balance other activities to create an emotionally satisfying life.

SPARKS get...

kids going on a positive path, away from the conflicts and negative issues—violence, promiscuity, drugs and alcohol—that give teens a bad name and damage relationships between youth and adults.

How to unleash the power of Sparks in the youth around you:

One: Recognize the power of Sparks (which includes knowing what your own Sparks are)

Two: Know teenagers as individuals

Three: Help discover teens' Sparks

Four: Support teens in pursuing their Sparks (be the captain of a teen's "Spark Team")

Five: Keep teens' Sparks lit

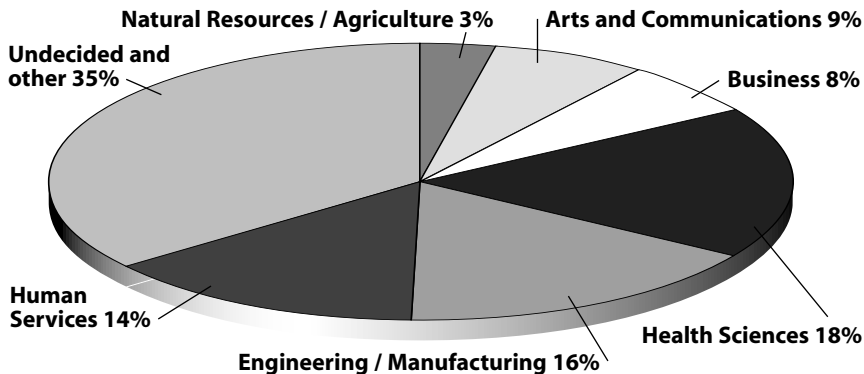
2008 MARQUETTE AND ALGER COUNTY SIDEBAR SURVEY

The *Sidebar Survey* was taken in 2008 by 1,777 youth in Marquette and Alger counties. The survey was developed locally by members of community organizations and agencies under the guidance of the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development. This survey was designed to collect additional information beyond the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. Survey highlights are shared below. Percentages represent what students reported at the time of the survey. More information is available at www.soyreport.org.

Post High School CAREER PLANNING

- 51% of the youth plan to participate in some form of post high school education; of those who do, 45% are planning to pursue a 4-year degree

Career Paths



ACCESS TO SUBSTANCES

What perceptions do area youth have regarding smoking, drinking, and illicit drugs?

Disapproving its use:

- 60% of area youth feel it is wrong for someone their age to drink alcohol, 68% to smoke cigarettes, and 72% to use marijuana

Consider it a great risk:

- 68% said smoking a pack of cigarettes or more per day is a great risk, 55% said regular use of marijuana is a great risk, and 38% viewed binge drinking once or twice each weekend as a great risk

How available are these substances?

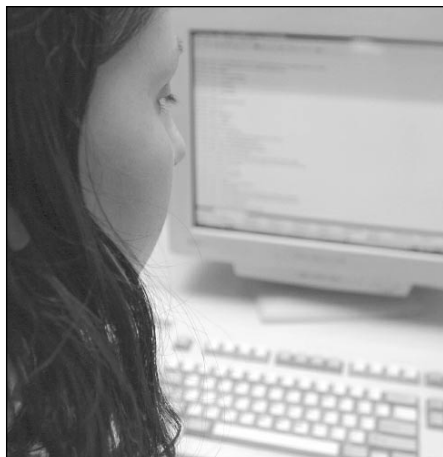
- 44% of teens report it is very easy to get alcohol; 44% indicate the same for cigarettes
- 21% of students said that it would be very easy to get alcohol from home without parents knowing it

NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- 48% of females are trying to lose weight, compared to 24% of males
- 76% of students eat fewer than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- 11% reported no strenuous physical activity for at least 30 minutes during any of the past 7 days

SUBSTANCE USE

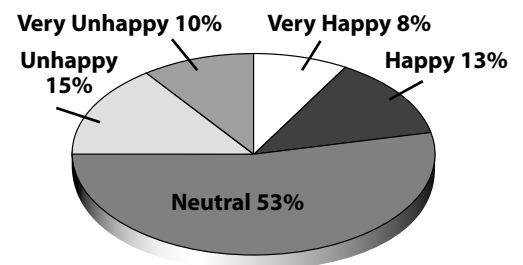
- 14% of students said they have taken a prescription drug to get high in the last year
- 43% of high school seniors said they drank alcohol for the first time under the age of 15
- 21% of students said they got drunk at least one time in the last month



INTERNET USE AND SAFETY

- 95% of students have a computer in their home
- 25% of students spent three or more hours online each day
- 81% of students use social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook

QUESTION: If your parents knew everything you saw, did, or posted online, how do you think they would feel?



BE AN ASSET BUILDER

Who can be an Asset Builder?



Any person, youth or adult, who commits time, energy or resources to making a difference in the community by promoting healthy youth

Basic Keys to Asset Building



1. Everyone can build assets
2. All young people need assets
3. Relationships are key
4. The more assets, the better
5. It takes the whole community

SIMPLE ASSET BUILDING IDEAS

Families

- Eat at least one meal together as a family daily
- Set aside at least one evening a week for family activities
- Serve others as a family; together with your child, help a neighbor
- Know where your children are, who they are with and that activities are alcohol and drug free

Churches

- Involve youth in leadership roles in the church and in worship services
- Intentionally foster intergenerational relationships by providing activities for all ages within the congregation
- Provide your facilities for community youth activities
- Volunteer in the MLK Service Day Initiative

Adults

- Build at least one sustained, caring relationship with a youth
- Learn the names of all children and teens who live near you or work in shops you frequent; greet them by name
- Bring the Youth & Adult Partnering for Community Change workshop to your community

Schools

- Encourage all students to do well in school
- Schedule asset building training for students, teachers, bus drivers, coaches, etc
- Participate in the GLCYD activity Star Power and make sure every child is connected to a caring adult at school
- Empower students to become engaged and involved in their school

Youth

- Be a positive influence on your friends
- Join with friends to plan fun activities that are alcohol and drug free
- Be a positive role model for younger youth
- Voice your opinion—participate in the GLCYD Youth Summit

Organizations

- Involve youth in leadership and programming
- Develop ways youth can volunteer and serve others
- Recognize them for their efforts
- Thank people who work with youth and show them that you value them
- Support Excellence in Education

For information on services and activities available through GLCYD, please give us a call!



This report was prepared by the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development. For more information on the 40 Developmental Assets and the State of Youth Report, log on to www.soyreport.org.

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