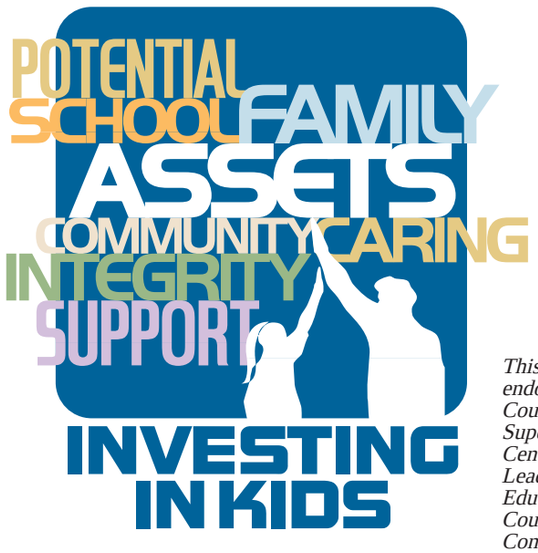
40 Key Building Blocks to Help kids Succeed

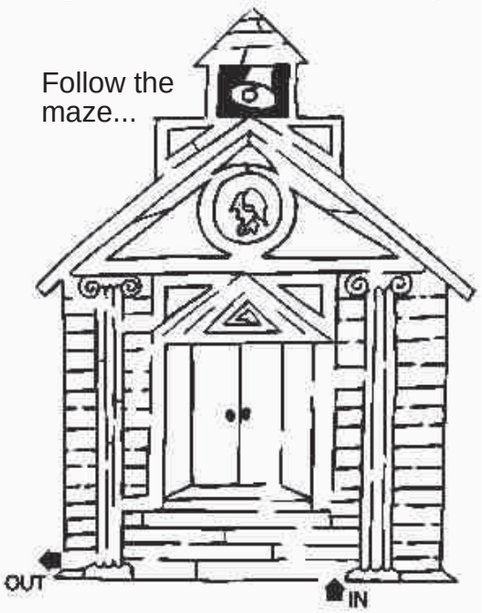


Search Institute has identified 40 building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible. These building blocks are referred to as "assets." Local schools have united in identifying monthly "asset" themes for schools and communities to help kids reach their potential.

This initiative endorsed by: Lorain County Superintendents, Center for Leadership in Education, Lorain County Prevention Connection, The Lorain County Prosecutor, The Lorain County Health Advisory Council and sponsors listed below.

Monthly Themes

September-*Decision-making*
October-*Respect*
November-*Responsibility*
December-*Caring*
January-*Fairness*
February-*Trustworthiness*
March-*Positive Identity*
April-*Citizenship*
May-*Empowerment*
June-*Support*
July-*Constructive use of time*
August-*Commitment to learning*



Even completing a simple puzzle requires decisions. Do I go left? Right? Straight? Let someone else play after you. Did they take your exact path? Or learn from your mastakes and find a more efficient way.

Decision Making
Theme for September

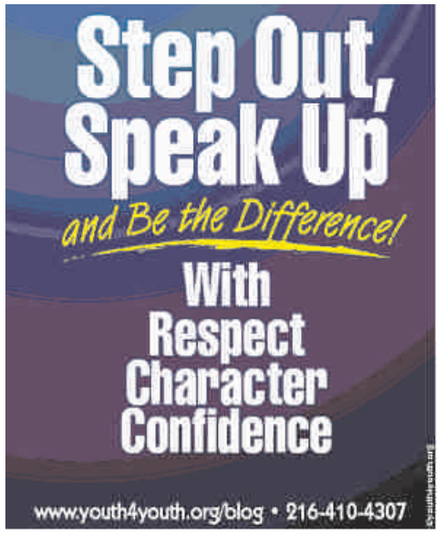
Young people know what is expected of them and whether activities or behaviors are "in bounds" or "out of bounds." Young people know how to plan ahead and use a model for making good choices.

I follow the rules of my family.
I tell my parents where I am going and who I am with when I am not at home.
I follow the rules of my school.
I respect my neighbors and appreciate it when they show they care about me.
I admire adults who model positive, responsible behavior.
I choose friends who model responsible behavior and are good influences on me.
I do well when my parents and teachers encourage me.
I plan ahead to get things done on time.
I use the S.T.A.R. model to help me make good choices.
I stop and take a deep breath before making important decisions.
I think about my choices and the possible consequences.
I act on the best choice that will help me and will not hurt others.

Co-Sponsors of this page:
Lorain County Children Services
Lorain County Board of Mental Health
Lorain County Domestic Relations Court

Decisions, decisions, decisions

Hey Kids! Have you ever been in a situation where you're playing a video game and the thought hits you…I have homework and a test to study for? You know what you should do – but you make a decision to keep playing because you want to beat the game. So you tell yourself, "Only 10-minutes more." 10-minutes turns into two-hours and before you know it, you're back in school unprepared for the test and without your homework for your next class. You squeak by with a D on the test and tell yourself, "I'm glad it wasn't an F, at least I passed." As for the homework, "Well, I'll just have to make sure I don't miss anymore assignments." We all know how that goes!



Decisions, decisions! How many decisions will you make today? Try counting them and you will soon discover you are constantly making decisions; hundreds if not thousands each day; should I get up, what do I wear today, what will I eat, shower or wash my face and that's only the beginning.

How does someone become a good decision-maker? It's simple! Start making decisions. Decision-Making is a skill; it's like a muscle, the more you use it, the stronger it becomes. The best part is it increases your self-esteem and self-confidence. You develop pride in yourself and gain more respect & trust from your peers and adults. You begin to make bigger decisions that take you faster and further in life. The best part is – anyone can do it!

Decision-making Tips

1.) **Make a decision to develop a daily routine.**
This decision helps you get each day off to a good start. If you prepare the night before you will end your day as a winner and be ready for a good start in the morning.

2.) **Put yourself in situations where you have to make decisions.** Make a decision to become involved with clubs or organizations in your school, church or community. You will learn both decision-making and leadership skills. Note: When you first join a club or organization it is normal to feel uncomfortable. Step out of your comfort zone. Years from now you will look back and say, "That was one of the best decisions I've ever made!"

3.) **Ask a trusted adult or role model for advice.**
Adults will help you consider things you never thought about because of their life experiences. Take their insight and use it to help make the best decision. Who are the adults in your life that can help you look at your options in different situations?

4.) **Decide who you will be as a person.**
Who you are is your character and it is based on your morals and beliefs. As we mature, we learn to gather facts and knowledge and include that information in our decision-making. There are times when we will find the best decision may not always be the most popular one or one I like, but it may very well be the best decision. When in question about a decision, "Listen with your heart."

Parent Resources:
Parent to Parent Network www.parent2parentnetwork.org
Strengthening Families in Lorain County contact: Elaine Georgas @ 440-282-9920

Larry Tracey, writer of this article, is an author and founder of Youth4Youth, which teaches success, leadership and promotes school safety by treating everyone with respect. His latest book, The Secret of the Can, is available at www.TheSecretOfTheCan.com. For Ultimate Leadership Training for your school or organization go to www.youth4youth.org and request more information.