

News *you can use...*

From the Poudre School District Mental Health Team



Building Assets Volume 1, Number 3 2007

This volume of News You Can Use provides thoughts and tips for building assets in students through everyday actions. The Mental Health Team hopes that you will find these suggestions useful throughout the school year.

Having a Positive Influence...

This is the time of year for resolutions and promises to do things differently, and hopefully better, than last year. We often overlook the things that we do well, and consequently do not acknowledge what is working.

The Mental Health Team works with administrators, teachers, counselors and parents everyday and knows how they work to improve the lives of children in their care. Many tell us they wish for more time to build positive relationships with their students. Often overlooked is what they are already doing well to connect with the children they influence.

The opportunity to influence children presents itself everyday. This moment may be missed because, at first glance, it doesn't appear to be significant. Waiting for award presentations, end-of-year recognitions and graduations postpones this opportunity. Throughout the school year, students may remember the smallest gesture made by an adult because they have a positive relationship with that person.



This issue offers some suggestions for supporting and acknowledging the youth that you encounter daily. If enough people do one or two simple actions, this can eventually add up to a lot of support for a lot of kids. Never underestimate the power of your influence!

Tips for Building...

Support

- Welcome their suggestions.
- Kneel, squat, or sit so you're at their eye level.
- Look in their eyes when you talk to them.
- Tell them what you expect of them.
- Expect their best; don't expect perfection.
- Catch them doing something right.
- Say "yes" and "you're right" a lot.
- Let them tell you how they feel.
- Tell them their feelings are okay.
- Discuss their hopes and fears.
- Give them space when they need it.
- Be consistent.

Empowerment

- Empower them to be themselves.
- Introduce them to new experiences.
- Give them good choices.
- Follow them when they lead.
- Help them take a stand and stand with them.

- Let them solve most of their own problems.
- Encourage win-win solutions.
- Ask them to help.
- Learn what they have to teach.

Positive Identity

- Have them share their stories.
- Inspire their creativity.
- Praise more; criticize less.
- Encourage them to think big.
- Magnify their magnificence.
- Delight in their discoveries and share their excitement.
- Help them become an expert at something.
- Tell them how terrific they are.
- Laugh at their jokes.
- Point out what you like about them.
- Give them lots of compliments.

Positive Values

- Respect them.
- Suggest better behaviors when they act out.
- Help them learn from mistakes.
- Admit when you make a mistake.
- Set boundaries and ensure safety.
- Introduce them to people of excellence.
- Encourage them to help others.
- Thank them.

Upcoming...

The 2007 Family and Youth Summit
Saturday March 31 – 9am-3pm
First National Bank Exhibition Hall,
The Ranch
<http://www.healthylarimer.org>