

## **Messages to Young People**

The key to speaking with many young people is to point out that what you're talking about is not an adult program for young people, and it's not just about what adults could do differently to help young people more. Young people can build assets for themselves and with their friends, and they can do good things for their community. In fact, they're probably the most significant influence on the type of social and emotional environment they live in, because they're the ones who determine how young people treat each other. You can point out in particular the tremendous influence that teenagers have on younger children. Focus on young people during your presentation: What do *they* want? What do *they* think? What would help *them*? How can *they* help others? How would *they* approach this?

You can also acknowledge that many young people have boundless energy and creativity, two qualities that are invaluable in building assets.

### ***Messages specific to this audience:***

- This is not an adult program intended to "fix" young people: Although the framework focuses on changing adults' attitudes and behaviors, young people can also build Developmental Assets themselves.
- Young people can help their friends, adults, younger children, and their community through building Developmental Assets.
- Young people can have a significant influence in changing their physical environment through artwork and other creative efforts.
- Young people can have a significant influence in improving their community through service projects and through working with their local asset-building initiative.

### ***Ways that members of this audience might help build assets:***

- Get to know adults they admire by striking up conversations with adults they'd like to get to know and reaching out to adults who may not know they're welcome.
- Sample a variety of experiences and activities in music, theater, art, and athletics, at school and in their community.
- Volunteer to:
  - Help out at a local nursing home, community center, or animal hospital;
  - Serve on boards and committees;
  - Be a peer helper;
  - Be a cross-age tutor;
  - Reach out to other young people who may be lonely or troubled;
  - Work on speakers bureaus; or set up formal acknowledgments of adults who make a positive difference for young people.