



## Building the Boundaries-and-Expectations Assets

All young people need to know their limits as well as what's expected of them. Here are ideas on how to build the six Boundaries-and-Expectations assets for children and youth at different ages:

Ages Birth to I	• Realize that babies don't intentionally violate standards and boundaries. Don't punish them for violating boundaries they can't understand.
	<ul> <li>Distract children from inappropriate behavior and draw attention to how you want them to act.</li> </ul>
Ages I to 2	<ul> <li>Give simple, understandable boundaries, such as, "Sit down," or "Don't bite."</li> <li>Enforce boundaries consistently so children don't get confused.</li> <li>Affirm children when they act appropriately.</li> </ul>
Ages 3 to 5	<ul> <li>Stay calm when children act out in highly emotional ways.</li> <li>Model how you want children to act; don't just tell them what to do and what not to do.</li> </ul>
	• Learn what to expect from preschoolers. Read about child development in books and magazines, talk to other parents, or talk to preschool teachers or child-care workers.
Ages 6 to 11	• Encourage schools, neighbors, organizations, and communities to have consistent boundaries and consequences so children know how to act in different settings.
	• Be firm about boundaries that keep kids safe. Don't negotiate these boundaries.
	• Challenge children to do their best in school, and help them whenever you can.
Ages 12 to 15	• Be patient, calm, and consistent as young teenagers test the boundaries you set.
	<ul> <li>Negotiate new boundaries as children grow older. Work together on what's acceptable and what's not.</li> </ul>
	• Ask young people where they are going and who they will be with.
Ages 16 to 18	• Help teenagers think about their goals for the future and what kind of boundaries they'll need to meet them.
	<ul> <li>Continue to have boundaries for appropriate behaviors and conse- quences for violating those boundaries.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Respect teenagers' privacy needs while showing interest in their friends and activities.</li> </ul>
	• Challenge teenagers to do their best in school and other activities.

Developmental Assets<sup>®</sup> are positive factors within young people, families, communities, schools, and other settings that research has found to be important in promoting the healthy development of young people. From *Pass It On! Ready-to-Use Handouts for Asset Builders, Second Edition*. Copyright © 2006 by Search Institute<sup>®</sup>; 612-376-8955; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org. This handout may be reproduced for educational, noncommercial uses only (with this copyright line). All rights reserved.