



Vancouver Island Cooperative  
Preschool Association

Member of Parent Participation  
Preschools International (PCPI)

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## Asset Building is for Kids!

by: Keith Pattinson

"Much of the work of Asset Building occurs for free. It is the stuff people do in their everyday lives." - Peter Benson, President, Search Institute

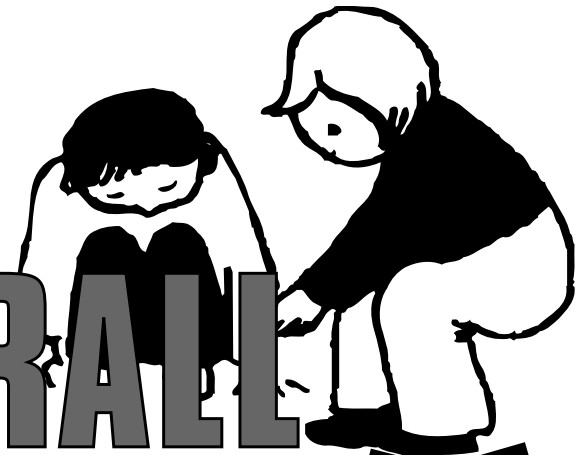
The assets I am talking about are not the kind you might readily assume - the ones that pertain to money, real estate, and RRSPs - but a kind that's more important to kids. They're called Developmental Assets. There are 40 of them, and they describe the opportunities, skills, relationships, values, and self-perceptions that all children and youth need to grow to happy, responsible, and successful adulthood.

Search Institute of Minneapolis, Minnesota identified these "life building blocks" through research involving over one million American young people. The Developmental Assets are considered important in protecting young people from the kinds of behaviours we discourage, such as drug and alcohol abuse, violence, bullying, and intolerance. Equally important, these same assets have been found to be more

# COVERALL

Winter 2003

V I C P A



prevalent in the lives of young people who report high levels of academic achievement, strong commitment to healthy lifestyles, and a commitment to support and be of service to others.

American survey results indicate that kids are growing up in environments which offer an average of only 18 of the 40 assets. Recent surveys of approximately 4,000 young Canadians in Summerland, Penticton, and Princeton have produced surprisingly, some say alarmingly, similar results.

Over the past-two and a half years, the Asset Building idea has been introduced in over 35 towns and cities throughout British Columbia through the support of the National Crime Prevention Centre's Community Mobilization Program, Vancouver Foundation, and the B.C. Gaming Commission. An-estimated 8,000 Moms, Dads, police officers, neighbours, educators, politicians, business people, and community leaders have learned how they can expand the Asset Building idea in favour of young people within their span of influence.

We're also seeing encouraging and overwhelming evidence that Asset Building is not only about what responsible, caring adults can do for young people, but what children and youth themselves can do to build assets in the lives of others - brothers and sisters, friends, fellow students, and teammates. And we're seeing evidence that young people appear to reach their own highest levels of personal development when they're doing

something for somebody else, in this case encouraging the development of assets among their friends.

In Summerland, where Asset Building was introduced community-wide about two years ago, leadership classes in the high school have skyrocketed from 30 students to 160. Among them are teens who conduct introductory orientations of Grade 8 students into their high school, earning these teen mentors the satisfaction and recognition normally given sports heroes. Youth concerned with low levels of understanding and trust towards them by older residents and seniors have engaged in individual and collective dialogue between the generations in order to break down barriers - stores and shops with youth-unfriendly policies have welcomed the positive ideas of young people and attitudes and behaviours are changing.

A "Telling the Asset Story" presentation team comprised of 20 Summerland teens has facilitated workshops and seminars designed to introduce young people and adults alike to the asset idea. They have appeared throughout their own community and in Princeton, Penticton, Kamloops, Victoria, Banff, Okotoks, Whitehorse, and recently before the Union of B.C. Municipalities in Victoria. In doing so they have demonstrated that they are capable of being an essential part of the solution when it comes to joining with adults in creating safer, more respectful environments in which all of us live.

## President's Pen



Since our children are at preschool for only two years there is a high turnover of parents in the cooperative system. Without a formal structure and support system it would be difficult for any preschool to maintain the procedures and documentation to run an effective preschool. With a group of preschools working together a common association can provide the continuity and support which enable the current parents to manage your preschool.

VICPA is your support organization. When your preschool is running smoothly VICPA's support role is minimal. However, when preschools have problems VICPA is there to assist. VICPA is made up of a small executive, an administrative coordinator, an ECE consultant and the presidents from the member preschools. When necessary your preschool is able to ask for assistance and when possible should offer support. How can your preschool support VICPA? By participating in the VICPA executive and committees, by sending volunteers to events and by letting the community at large know about cooperative preschools and VICPA. Each year it is a challenge to get input from the general membership of the preschools. This may be in part because when your preschool is functioning well you are less aware of what support VICPA offers simply because you do not need it at the time. Situations can change quickly.

In 1998 Christopher Robin Preschool closed. In the years just prior to closing they had three full classes and a healthy reserve of money. Due to a few filing "errors" they lost their charity status and their bingo license. Within eighteen months they had to close their doors. Why do I bring up this sad tale? We cannot get complacent with the management of our preschools.

In 1999 VICPA celebrated their 50th anniversary of cooperative preschools in Victoria. We have a valuable and respected heritage that many people have worked hard to build, establish and pass on. We have a responsibility to the past members whose efforts we are benefiting from and to those future members who have yet to participate in the wonderful world of cooperative preschool. We need to work with each other and VICPA to continue to grow and thrive.

This is the time of year when VICPA and each of the preschools is looking for executive members. We are volunteers and not expected to be experts. Each one of you has something to offer your preschool and VICPA. Past experiences have shown that preschools that have enthusiastic executives and have parents that take on VICPA executive positions are very closely linked to all the support systems offered by VICPA and therefore stay or become healthy, thriving preschools.

Your involvement in your preschool and the VICPA ensures that there is a wonderful place for you and your children. Taking on a position for VICPA is considered to be a preschool job so you are not expected to do two jobs, after all we all are busy with our children. If you are graduating to kindergarten please keep in mind that you have many years to become involved in the elementary school PAC; consider staying involved in preschool for another year or two. VICPA needs parents to become involved and ensure the future of cooperative preschools. Take an active role in your preschool and VICPA and work with an enthusiastic team. If you would like more information regarding the various VICPA and committee positions speak to your president, VICPA 1st vice president Jeanne Svendsen or myself.

Janet Anderson – 598-7566  
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## VICPA Calendar of Events

- Mar 25 VICPA BOARD Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
28-31 PCPI meetings
- Apr 4 E.C.E. Committee Meeting  
15 VICPA Executive Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
22 VICPA Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- May 1 Coverall Deadline  
9 E.C.E. Committee Meeting  
3 Making Tomorrow Conference, Uvic  
20 VICPA Executive Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
24 VICPA Annual Meeting, 10 am - 2 pm  
Emmanuel Baptist Church
- SPRING Workshops for incoming preschool executives, Emmanuel Baptist
- June 6 E.C.E. Committee Meeting  
\* VICPA Executive and Committee Chair Orientation, Location TBA

## VICPA Office Moved

The VICPA office has moved. The new address is:  
50 Marler Drive  
Victoria, BC V9B 6B8  
Phone, Fax & Email stay the same.

## VICPA Annual General Meeting

Will be held May 24th, 2003 at the Emmanuel Baptist Church from 10 am to 2 pm.

## VICPA ECE Consultant

Applications are now being accepted for ECE Consultant for VICPA.

The consultant's role is to act as liaison between VICPA, member preschools and ECEs, to act as an advisor to ECEs, assist in hiring and orienting new ECEs, and attend/conduct various meetings and workshops throughout the year.

This is a part time position with some evening hours. Applicants must have a minimum of 2 years experience with non-profit organizations and be ECE qualified or equivalent.

Application Deadline – May 2nd, 2003



Asset Building...from page 1

During the course of Drug Awareness Week in Kamloops, the Phoenix Centre and the Boys and Girls Club of Kamloops joined forces to host the first-ever Asset Building workshop for Grade 6 and 7 students in Canada. They initially expected an attendance of about 40, and were forced to change venues when four local schools registered 330 students for the 11/2-hour event.

The workshop was designed to introduce children to their potential to build assets in the lives of others, and offered a chance for each of them to complete this sentence:

When I leave here today, here's what I'll try to do to help kids my age and younger....

Each participant was given a sheet with six lines on which to write down their ideas. When they indicated at the end of five minutes that they needed more time, we allowed another five, thinking they were having trouble grasping the concept. When they begged for another two minutes, we concluded that our approach was off the mark.

How wrong we were! In the end, 27 boys and girls volunteered to come on stage to read their commitments. Due to time and space limitations, we were compelled to narrow the report-back to those who had compiled 20 or more individual ideas in the allocated 12 minutes time. Those of us who worry about the lack of values, innovation, and sense of responsibility among our future leaders should be heartened - in total, the 330 youngsters probably documented over 2,500 ways in which they intended to make a difference!

- I'll go to school and help some people who don't understand questions.
- Tie little kids shoe laces. Give them a putup instead of a putdown.
- Stick up for someone younger. Even if they're an adult, try and help. Let them borrow something if they need it.
- To never say rude comments.
- I'll give my Mom a kiss each day.
- I'll help those who are crying at school. Say hi when I pass by. I will share all my joy.

And so you're absolutely right if you've concluded that Asset Building isn't solely about parents, schools, professionals, police officers, or government taking higher levels of responsibility to provide kids with as

many of the 40 assets as possible. What this initiative is about is all British Columbians - neighbours, business people, uncles, aunts, grandparents, youth and children together accepting the reality that we'll best help our children and youth acquire the maximum number of assets when we acknowledge that all children are our children and that we need to find new ways to connect them with adults.

Above all, it's important that we recognize and act on the simple truth that young people will learn most effectively not on what we say, but through the behaviours we model. I can recall as a young father often being preoccupied with the concern that my children didn't listen to me all of the time. As I grew older and hopefully wiser, it became more clear to me that what I should really be worried about was the fact that they were watching me all of the time!

There has never been a time in our history when children and youth so desperately need positive role models in their lives - significant adults who teach by example old-fashioned values like honesty, respect, tolerance, enthusiasm, compassion, and industry. To find out how you, your family, neighbourhood, or community can become actively involved, please contact Boys and Girls Clubs of British Columbia.

*Keith Pattinson is the Regional Director, Boys and Girls Clubs of British Columbia and is the Keynote Speaker at the Making Tomorrow Conference in May.*

## **Countryside Preschool Gigantic Garage Sale**

Saturday April 26th, 9 am to 3 pm

Great bargains on kid stuff and more at this multi-family garage sale to benefit Countryside Cooperative Preschool. Burgers, hot dogs, face painting and activities for preschoolers too!

Same day as the huge Dean Park neighbourhood garage sale - make it a family outing! 1923 Sandover Cr. (Dean Park area of Saanich Peninsula - take East Saanich Rd. to Barrett Dr., then left on Sandover) For info call Susan at 544-1448.

## **VICPA Online Auction**

In May the VICPA goes online to raise funds for the benefit of our preschools. We have signed an agreement with GoBid, a division of Charity Choice Auctions, to hold an auction from May 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>. GoBid is a Canadian Company who specialize in online auctions for not-for-profit organizations. We are aiming at making our auction one of the best online auctions to be held on Vancouver Island.

An Online auction is one of the most cost-efficient ways for raising money and allows us to minimize our administrative costs so that more of the money raised goes directly to supporting the preschools and enhancing the programs for our children.

Both GoBid and ourselves will be promoting the auction, we expect many thousands of people to window shop their way through the auction and make bids on the vast range of items. A few of the exciting items are:

- A two night getaway including accommodation, 2 breakfasts and 2 dinners for 2 people at Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing in Blue River, BC.
- A beautiful Gunther Mele Cherry finish Jewell Case
- A gift Certificate to Café' Brio - cucina domestica in Victoria
- Party Lite Candle Gift
- 2 Sun Protective Funwear suits donated by NoZone of Victoria
- A Romantic 2 night getaway to the spectacular Aerie Resort - Malahat, BC
- Tea for Two at the Fairmont Empress
- Natanis Natural Foods Gift Basket
- A 2 night stay at the beautiful Beach Acres Resort in Parksville, BC
- A gift certificate @ Today's Lunch Co.
- A three hour whale watching tour for 2 people from Seafun Safaris

Visit [gobid.ca](http://gobid.ca) during the month of May and click on the VICPA Auction. These and many more items will be available for bidding on. To bid, select the category you are interested in & select the item you want to bid on.

Thank-you for supporting the Vancouver Island Cooperative Preschool Association.

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# Rough and Tumble Play

Submitted by Kim Atkinson  
ECE, Lansdowne Preschool

Jeff was about to turn six. He was bright, attractive and--generally avoided by other kids. "I didn't understand it," said his mom. "I would see the rest of the boys wrestling and pushing each other around in someone's backyard, but as soon as Jeff would join them--someone was hurt or crying. And Jeff had done it."

It seemed that what would start as horseplay usually ended with Jeff punching someone. Children like Jeff have somehow missed learning the skills of a common type of play that researchers call rough-and-tumble--a term used to describe play fighting and play chasing.

According to studies by Anthony D. Pellegrini, Ph.D., professor of early childhood education at the University of Georgia rough-and-tumble play is something that actually should be encouraged. They found that through this type of play, children learn social skills. Because children like Jeff do not have these skills, they cannot distinguish between play and aggression and so they turn fun play situations into fights.

To understand how children can benefit from rough-and-tumble play, consider this scene. A group of four boys were whispering plans while walking to a place where running and climbing were permitted.

Upon reaching the large carpeted room, two of the boys headed directly to the top of the jungle gym while the other two ran to the far wall. A command was shouted by one of the boys on the jungle gym. They jumped to the floor, sped to their cohorts and began play fighting. Prisoners were taken, prisoners escaped. Prisoners were chased. Finally tiring of the game, the four went off together to join a beanbag toss.

More than merely letting off steam

through aimless climbing and running, these boys accomplished some tasks of which even the most sophisticated members of a Board would be proud! They met, they planned, they assigned roles and responsibilities, and they carried out assignments with enthusiasm being certain to observe certain rules of behavior.

This play looks wild and out of control but it is very different from aggression. It can improve a child's ability to solve problems that arise in social situations and provides practice at developing social flexibility. It requires negotiation, multiparty alliances and the ability to redefine a situation.

## **Recognizing rough-and-tumble play**

Figuring out the difference between play fighting and real fighting can be confusing at first. Fortunately experts have found that there are discernable differences.

- In both aggressive behavior and rough-and-tumble play children will hit each other. However, in play the hitting is done only with open hands, not fists and rarely do the blows connect.
- In play participants exchange roles. One child chases another, and then turns around to be chased. The play continues in a reciprocal manner, and when it ends, the children usually remain together, smiling. In aggression the children do not change roles, don't smile and will quickly separate when the episode is over.
- Aggression is likely to involve disputes over toys or possessions.

Rough-and-tumble play, according to researchers is more likely to take place when very few toys are available and on large, soft surfaced areas such as grassy lawns. While it is helpful for adults to differentiate the difference between rough-and-tumble play and aggression, it is essential for the participants to know the difference.

## **Teaching children to play**

To help a child learn to enjoy rough-and-tumble play, be sure to provide

plenty of opportunity for outdoor play or large indoor activity spaces. If your child seems confused about the differences, have him or her sit with you and watch children playing at a park or playground. Point out the smiles, open hands and turn taking that you see in play fighting and chasing. Watch for aggressive acts and ask your child if he can guess how the victim of the aggression feels. There are a number of children's books that can also help.

Help your child to think of alternative ways to solve problems in play. One parent recalled his father would make up stories and ask him to supply the endings. He said the stories were all similar: "Once there was a little boy who always wanted his very own basketball. One day he saw his friend playing with a brand new basketball. The little boy ran up to his friend and....." He came to realize that grabbing and hitting didn't always bring the desired results. This was an exercise in exploring other solutions.

A parent or caregiver can enjoy some rough-and-tumble play with the child. The behavior you model as you play helps the child to learn how to act with other children. It gives the child a chance to try out rough-and-tumble play with a trusted person.

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## **VICPA Online Auction**

May 1st to May 31st

At [gobid.ca](http://gobid.ca)

Do you have a product or service that you would like to donate to the VICPA Auction? We would love to hear from you. Our auction will be live 24/7 on the Internet; your business, product or service can be viewed by anyone with a computer anytime, anywhere. For the cost of the item you are donating that is more exposure than you could hope to get from traditional advertising.

For more information

Joanne Scott - VICPA Marketing/  
Fundraising Resource @ 592-5855  
or [jshm@shaw.ca](mailto:jshm@shaw.ca)

