

Administration Manual

Search Institute
Profiles of Student Life:
Attitudes and Behaviors

Search

I N S T I T U T E

The Banks Building
615 First Avenue N.E.
Suite 125
Minneapolis, MN
55413

1-800-888-7828

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

This manual gives you a complete view of the procedures involved in administering the survey *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors (A&B)*. **The quality of the results depends on the quality of the administration.** Therefore, the information that follows is a valuable foundation for a careful and successful survey administration.

Not all of the information in this manual may be relevant to your particular setting. The manual intends to guide your efforts and answer questions as you proceed.

SEARCH INSTITUTE

Search Institute is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth, and communities.

To accomplish this mission, Search Institute conducts research, develops publications and practical tools, and provides training and technical assistance. The Institute collaborates with others to promote long-term organizational and cultural change that supports the healthy development of all children and adolescents.

THE FRAMEWORK OF 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

Developmental Assets represent the positive relationships, opportunities, skills and values that promote the positive development of all children and adolescents.

The Developmental Assets framework grew out of Search Institute's research over the past decade. The theoretical underpinnings of the framework reside in the research pertaining to risk and resiliency, prevention, and health promotion.

THE SURVEY *SEARCH INSTITUTE PROFILES OF STUDENT LIFE: ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS (A&B)*

Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes Behaviors (A&B) was developed in 1989, with major revisions made in 1996. It is a 156-item survey that measures eight principal asset domains: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity.

In addition to measuring Developmental Assets, the survey also measures eight thriving indicators (succeeds in school, helps others, values diversity, maintains good health, exhibits leadership, resists danger, delays gratification, overcomes adversity), five developmental deficits (alone at home, TV overexposure, physical abuse, victim of violence, drinking parties), and 24 risk-taking behaviors (such as chemical use, sexual involvement, antisocial behavior).

SURVEY PURPOSE

The survey is intended to provide baseline aggregate data on which to base development of asset-building strategies and the creation of positive new visions and actions for the youth in your

community. The A&B survey provides communities with a portrait of the Developmental Assets, deficits, risk behaviors, and thriving indicators of their 6th- to 12th-grade youth. The survey has become a catalyst for hundreds of communities participating in Search Institute's Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth initiative. This national effort seeks to motivate and equip individuals, organizations, and their leaders to join together in nurturing caring and responsible children and adolescents.

In addition to its use as a community mobilization tool for building Developmental Assets, the survey also has been used to:

- Assist state and local educators in monitoring indicators related to student well-being;
- Set priorities and strategies for programs and services;
- Provide a common framework for cross-sector collaboration;
- Provide data for grant writing;
- Provide data for reports to funding agencies; and
- Provide a “youth voice” in organizational and community planning.

GRADE LEVELS

The survey is designed for students in grades 6 through 12. Any combination of these grades may be surveyed. The size of your student population in these grades will help determine how many students you survey and whether you survey all students in participating grades or a random sample of students. For more information, see “Selecting Survey Participants”, page 8.

Note: Although grade 5 is listed on the survey for those occasions when 5th-grade students are in a combined class with 6th-graders, the survey is not intended to be used with students in 5th grade. Search Institute has not conducted any field tests to determine the survey's age-appropriateness for this grade level. In addition, the A&B survey report is designed to report data for grades 6 through 12 only. Surveys marked as grade 5 are eliminated from the dataset and not included in the A&B report.

SURVEY CONTENT

The content of the survey is supported by an extensive literature review of over 800 scientific articles and reports on adolescent development, risk and resiliency factors, and prevention. The items contained in the survey (including risk behavior items) represent a wide range of experiences facing our nation's 6th through 12th grade youth.

On occasion a community or school has requested permission to eliminate certain items from the survey. Because both the survey scanning and report processing methods use automated procedures, requests to modify the survey or report cannot be accommodated. Search Institute cannot process any surveys in which items have been covered in any way. In addition, students may not be instructed to skip specific questions as this interferes with the scoring processes for the report. If survey items are eliminated or if students are instructed to skip specific items, the organization contracting the survey study will still be responsible

for paying for the surveys, even though no reports will be processed.

TIME REQUIRED

Enlisting Support. *The amount of time needed to gain broad-based support and/or consensus for administering the survey varies by community.* Enabling community members to hear the experiences of a significant number of youth is a key contribution the school district can make toward creating a supportive environment in which youth can thrive. In order to play that role well, school districts will find it helpful to engage several community representatives—including parents and youth—to help plan the administration process.

Ordering Materials. Search Institute will send the surveys and administration materials within two weeks of receiving your written order.

Survey Administration. The survey contains 156 questions and takes approximately 50 minutes to administer. Students in the upper grade levels may complete the survey in less time; students in lower grades may need more than 50 minutes. Consider the reading level of your students and allow more time for those who may need it, e.g., students for whom English is a second language.

When more than one school building is involved in a study, Search Institute recommends that data be collected across all sites within a two-week time period.

Report Processing. Completed surveys are returned to Search Institute for processing. Reports are mailed approximately 10 weeks from the time Search Institute receives all surveys for your study. If your study involves use of the survey across multiple sites, Search Institute needs to receive data from all sites before survey processing can begin. If subreports are to be provided for each site, surveys must be separated and identified by each site. See “Shipping Instructions” on page 13.

WHAT’S INCLUDED IN THE A&B SURVEY REPORT

The A&B survey report (titled *Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth*) is 80 pages in length and includes the following:

An overview of the Developmental Assets framework, a description of how your study was conducted, and suggestions for using the report findings.

- Analysis of the levels of external assets, internal assets, and deficits as reported by your students. Data are presented by total sample, gender, and grade. (See additional related information on page 5, third paragraph under Confidentiality Issues.)
- Analysis of the levels of 24 risk-taking behaviors, 10 high-risk behavior patterns, and 8 thriving indicators as reported by your students. Data are presented by total sample, gender,

and grade. (See additional related information on page 5, third paragraph under Confidentiality Issues.)

- Analysis of the relationship of 24 risk-taking behaviors, 10 high-risk behavior patterns, and 8 thriving indicators by four categories of asset levels: 0-10 assets, 11-20 assets, 21-30 assets, and 31-40 assets. Also included are the average number of 24 risk-taking behaviors and the average number of eight thriving indicators by each of these four asset levels.
- Concluding remarks about the opportunities communities have for enhancing the positive development of youth, the importance of fostering Developmental Assets, and steps for taking action.
- Four Appendices: Individual item frequencies; item mapping to assets, deficits, thriving, and risk behaviors; a bibliography of the research undergirding the Developmental Assets framework; and a partial listing of Search Institute's print and video resources
- Nine-page Executive Summary

THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE SURVEY PROCESS

The value of youth involvement in your survey process and information sharing cannot be overstated. Youth involvement at all levels of the process can shift the tone from youth as "sources of data" to "knowledge generators" and provides a means for giving them a stronger voice in their school and community. Students can be involved through the entire survey process including planning, administration, dissemination, and action implementation. For example, youth can:

- Present or co-present the reasons for using the survey to the school board or other relevant decision makers
- Convey the assets message as well as the intent and purpose of the survey to their fellow students
- Assist the classroom survey administrators
- Present or co-present survey results at a town meeting, school assembly, local service groups, etc.
- Serve on an ongoing planning and implementation task force

II. QUESTIONS ABOUT SCIENTIFIC QUALITY

Several factors are involved in determining the scientific quality of a survey instrument. The issues most often raised by communities considering use of the A&B survey are listed below.

CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

Student anonymity. Search Institute takes great care to ensure that no individual student's answers will be traced back to her or him. Students do not put their names on the survey, and there are no hidden identification numbers on the form itself. Thus, the survey is done anonymously. (An exception to this rule occurs if the survey is used in a longitudinal study that requires tracking participants over time. Special arrangements must be made in advance with Search Institute.)

To additionally maintain student anonymity, all completed surveys are put into one envelope per classroom. Each classroom survey envelope is sealed at the end of the class period. Envelopes are returned to Search Institute, where the surveys are prepared for scanning.

All findings are reported in aggregate form by total group, gender, and grade. No individual student data are presented. If the number of students in a particular grade is fewer than 30, the data from that grade are either suppressed or merged with data from the nearest grade. Gender data will not be reported if there are fewer than 30 students in either gender category. When it is necessary to suppress data for a grade or gender, responses from those students are included in the "total group" percentages.

Because of the minimum requirements for reporting data by grade and gender, final sample sizes of fewer than 100 students means there will be missing data throughout the report. Search Institute recommends that the full report be purchased when the final aggregate sample size is greater than 100 students. For subgroup reports of 50-100 students, an Executive Summary may be purchased instead of the 80-page subreport. (Note: An Executive Summary may not be ordered in place of the initial aggregate report.) **No report will be prepared on groups of fewer than 50 students.**

To ensure data quality a computerized check is made on each survey to look for inconsistency in survey responses, number of survey items not answered, etc. Surveys that do not meet the quality checks are eliminated from the dataset. Your report is based on the surveys that remain in the dataset after these quality checks have been made. The percentage of surveys eliminated from a dataset is typically about 5 to 8 percent of the total number of surveys received. This percentage tends to be somewhat higher in larger urban school districts.

Note: If the total sample size for the aggregate report is fewer than 50 students, Search Institute will not run the report. The contracting organization will be responsible for the cost of the

surveys even though no report is run. To protect the confidentiality of students, completed survey forms will not be returned to the school or contracting agency.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Reliability refers to the degree to which something is measured consistently over time.

Validity is the degree to which a procedure measures what it is intending to measure.

Many of the items used in this survey have an extensive history through Search Institute's work. Other items have been developed in other studies. For example, many of the items regarding alcohol and other drug use are from the study entitled *Monitoring the Future* (conducted by the Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan). Some items were developed through a process of pilot testing, pre-testing, and question revision.

As with most instruments dealing with anonymous self-reported data, there is no direct, objective validation of the items used. However, a considerable amount of evidence strongly indicates that self-report questions produce largely valid data.

A Technical Overview for the A&B survey is available from Search Institute. The Overview includes information on scale definitions, validity, and reliability.

DATA QUALITY

Schools often ask how they can know that the data are accurate or, in other words, how they can know that students answered truthfully. Might students have lied or greatly exaggerated their responses?

Over its 40 years of doing survey work, Search Institute has built into its computer programs ways of eliminating surveys that seem invalid. A&B surveys are eliminated from a dataset when (1) 40 or more questions are not answered, (2) the surveys contain disparate information on similar items, (3) there are excessively unrealistic responses to key items, (4) there are inconsistencies within time frames, and (5) a grade level other than those intended to be surveyed has been marked. Also, one item is included as an intentional way of assessing student honesty. The percentage of surveys eliminated from a dataset is typically about 5 to 8 percent of the total number of surveys received. This percentage tends to be somewhat higher in large urban school districts.

In very rare cases, it may be the judgment of Search Institute that the quality of the data is such that a report should not be released. Search Institute will discuss the implications of data quality with the contracting agency before a final decision is made.

COMPARING DATA ACROSS TIME

Very often a school or community wants to administer the A&B survey at more than one point in time to assess the effectiveness of a particular program or initiative. In assessing change over time, several things must be kept in mind.

- The *A&B* survey was not designed as a program evaluation tool, and therefore it is limited in its effectiveness as an evaluation instrument. It is intended to provide a community with baseline and trend data on groups of students.
- When the *A&B* survey is administered at more than one point in time, it is appropriate to make comparisons in percentages for the same grade at two different points in time (e.g., 10th-graders in spring 2002 to 10th-graders in spring 2004). However, comparing the same student class over time (e.g., 10th-graders in spring 2002 to 12th-graders in spring 2004) is problematic. Results for a class may change in unpredictable ways due to factors such as an influx of new students, students moving away, and/or students dropping out. These changes affect the comparability of the data. (See also Use of the Survey as a Pre-Post Measure or Program Evaluation Tool below.)
- The statistical significance of a difference in percentages is influenced by a number of factors such as the size of the group being surveyed and the response options being considered for comparison. Therefore, although differences between percentages may seem significant (such as 5% or 10%), they may not be statistically significant.

**USE OF THE SURVEY AS A
PRE-POST MEASURE OR
PROGRAM EVALUATION TOOL**

The *A&B* survey was designed to provide aggregate-level data for individual communities. It was not designed as an individual assessment instrument or as a program evaluation tool. Some of the difficulties that would be encountered in using the survey as a pre-post measure or as a program evaluation tool follow.

Student anonymity. Because of the sensitive nature of the questions, students complete the survey anonymously; therefore, it is not possible to follow individual student responses across survey administrations. This makes pre-post measures or evaluation of program effectiveness difficult as student populations probably change between the two (or more) survey administrations due to the addition of new students, absenteeism, school dropouts, or mobility of students.

Measurement issues. For simplicity of communication with communities, Developmental Assets are measured dichotomously (that is, students either “have” or “do not have” the asset). While it is possible for changes to occur in the level of assets between the two (or more) survey administrations, the changes likely will not be at a level that can easily be measured by the survey or that will affect the overall percentage of youth reporting a particular asset.

Evaluating specific programs. When measuring the effectiveness of a program, questions about the specific program elements need to be asked. It is unlikely that the items contained in the *A&B* survey are sufficient for that purpose. In addition, because the survey scanning and report processes are automated, program-specific items cannot be added to the *A&B* survey.

III. PREPARATION FOR SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The following steps are critical for conducting a quality study using the *A&B* survey.

SELECTING YOUR ON-SITE SURVEY COORDINATOR

It is important for the organization contracting the survey study to select one on-site survey coordinator who will be the contact person for Search Institute's survey staff. Your community's on-site coordinator (in collaboration with your survey task force and/or school district) will:

- Select the grade levels to be surveyed
- Determine appropriate parental consent procedures on the basis of relevant federal or state laws and school district policies (e.g., use of passive vs. active parental consent)
- Schedule the survey administration date
- Ensure appropriate communication to staff, students, parents, and community members
- Notify survey administrators of date and procedures
- Ensure delivery of blank surveys to appropriate school buildings and/or classrooms, and clarify instructions
- Collect completed surveys, complete the survey administration form, and ship them to Search Institute
- Distribute copies of the report(s)

The survey coordinator may be someone from a school, an organization sponsoring the survey, or a community volunteer. In those cases where the survey is being conducted as part of a large community effort, the survey coordinator will need to have good communication skills with the school district and other sectors of the community. Note that this person may be guided by others involved in the survey planning process.

SELECTING SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

The *A&B* survey may be administered to students in grades 6 through 12. For smaller schools or school districts, you will want to survey all students in each participating grade. For studies involving large school districts, counties, or states, you may want to consider drawing a sample.

You may use one of the following methods for selecting participants:

- Survey all students in grades 6 through 12
- Survey all students in selected grades (e.g., 6, 8, 10, 12)
- Draw a random sample of classrooms
- Draw a random sample of students using an enrollment roster

If all students are to be surveyed, you may select a certain class period (e.g., 2nd hour) at which time all students are given the survey regardless of the subject area they are generally taught during that period. Another method is to select a subject that all students in particular grade levels must take and administer the survey during that particular subject, regardless of class period. Choose the method that allows for as close to 100 percent of the students being surveyed as possible. Avoid class periods during which students are more apt to be absent, such as first period or at the end of the day (when some students are dismissed for jobs or off-campus classes).

*For larger school systems, a random sample may be used. In the random sample process, the most critical task of the coordinator is to ensure that the students selected to participate are **representative** of all students in the grade levels involved. The quality of the study hinges on this process, so great care needs to be taken. There are two basic approaches to random sampling:*

*(1) **Sampling Students.** In this method, you randomly select as many names as you need for the study from the roster of all students at a designated grade level. Search Institute can help you determine the number of students to survey and the method for selecting students. Using this method means that the selected students will need to be released from their regular class activity and gathered in one location for the survey administration.*

*(2) **Sampling by Classroom.** To determine the number of classrooms needed, first consult with Search Institute regarding an adequate sample size. If, for example, it is determined that 250 8th-grade students should be surveyed, determine the number of classrooms this number represents. If there are approximately 25 students per classroom, you will need about 10 classrooms of 8th-grade students. Select a class subject that **all** 8th-grade students must take, regardless of achievement level (e.g., English, Social Studies). To randomly select these ten classes, assign numbers to all of the classes in that subject area, write each number on a separate piece of paper, mix up the numbers, and select ten numbers. **It is very important to select classes randomly and equally important not to select a subject designed for specific achievement levels.***

Search Institute will work with you to design a sampling frame for your study. This is particularly important when, in large studies, individual school reports may be requested in addition to an overall aggregate report. The number of students surveyed will depend upon the type of report(s) to be generated.

ADMINISTERING TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Special administration procedures may be necessary in some cases, such as students with learning or physical disabilities or for whom English is a second language.

Because of the sensitive nature of the A&B survey and the potential self-report of illegal behavior, the primary concern in survey administration must be to maintain the anonymity of each student's responses. In some cases, a disability (such as blindness) may prevent a student from participating, since it would

not be possible for her or his responses to be anonymous with a paper-pencil survey format and since other formats (such as computer or Braille versions) are not available. In other cases, special arrangements may be made to facilitate participation. Some examples follow.

Students with learning disabilities (LD). The survey administrator may read the survey aloud to a group of students or to an individual. To protect the students' answers from being seen, a screen may be used to separate the survey administrator from the students. It is important that students with learning disabilities take the survey in a room with minimal distractions.

In addition to reading the survey aloud, the survey administrator may define words or concepts not understood by the student(s).

It may be that the students will need assistance only through the first few questions, until they are comfortable with the survey format. In this case, the survey administrator may read aloud the first few questions and response options, and after that, be available to answer questions of individual students. For larger groups of students with special needs, perhaps more than one person could be available in the room to respond to individual student questions.

Students for whom English is a second language (ESL). Currently the A&B survey is available in English only. While a school may want to verbally translate the instructions as well as the questions and response options, Search Institute cannot guarantee the scientific quality of data collected through this process. Search Institute does not allow translated versions of the survey to be provided to students in print and subsequently transferred to the English form. This method jeopardizes student anonymity, data quality, and copyright.

In all cases, consult with your school district's ESL or LD program coordinator.

PARENT CONSENT

Under newly enacted federal law known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the type of consent required for a study in the public school setting depends on whether the study is funded in whole or in part by any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Note that the consent requirements below apply only to public schools and educational institutions that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education. These requirements do not apply to schools which do not receive federal funding. In general, one of the following two methods for obtaining parental consent must be used.

- *Passive consent (opt out)* is requested when parents are asked to fill out a form or call the school if they do not want their child to participate in the study. Consent is assumed if no such request is made.
- *Positive (or active) consent* is requested when parents are informed that they must return a signed permission slip for

their child to participate in the study. Consent cannot be assumed if no form is returned.

If the study is funded in whole or in part by any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, the school must obtain “the prior written consent of the parent”—i.e., the “positive consent” of the parent as defined above.

If the study is not funded in whole or in part by any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, the school must give parents the opportunity to “opt out” of the study—i.e., obtain “passive consent” as defined above. In addition, NCLB requires that schools establish, in consultation with parents, written policies which require that:

1. parents are **notified** and have an **opportunity to inspect** related materials, whenever a survey will be given that has been created by a third party or may touch on protected categories of sensitive information;
2. parents receive **annual notice of procedures**, at the beginning of the school year, for exercising their rights under these notification and inspection policies;
3. parents may **“opt out”** of participation in third-party surveys (non-Dept. of Ed. funded) containing any of the sensitive subject areas outlined in NCLB.

Regardless of the method required, Search Institute recommends that parents be as fully informed as possible about the survey. Information that is shared with parents should include:

- Why the survey is being done;
- How and when it will be administered;
- In what format the findings are reported (i.e., in aggregate form only, not by individual students);
- Whether (or how) the findings will be shared with the community at large;
- That a student’s grades will not be affected by her or his participation or nonparticipation; and
- How nonparticipating students will be handled (e.g., removed from the classroom to a study hall).

When positive consent is required, additional pre-survey lead time is needed for receiving signed consent forms. Initial response rates tend to be low, so follow-up procedures are generally needed. The quality of the data is dependent on a high response rate.

As noted above, under federal law, students have the right to refuse participation. Encourage participation by noting the importance of the study, how the information will be used, and methods for ensuring anonymity. Do not mandate participating. (See Administration Instructions, Appendix B.)

The survey coordinator should provide survey administrators with the names of students for whom parental consent has not been received. Special arrangements may be made to remove students to another setting or nonparticipating students may be instructed to study at their desks.

Sample positive and passive consent letters for parents (which are intended to be adapted to fit your study) are found in Appendix C. A one-page fact sheet (Appendix D) about Search Institute and the survey may be duplicated and sent to parents.

Please note that local regulations and state law may also govern the administration of student surveys. School administrators are strongly encouraged to review these laws and regulations before proceeding with the study.

For more information regarding federal legislation on parental consent, see the resources listed in Appendix E.

STUDENT CONSENT

As part of the survey administration procedures, students are informed that the survey is voluntary. In addition students are informed that they may skip items if they so choose. Encourage participation by noting the importance of the study, how the information will be used, and methods for ensuring anonymity, but do not mandate participation. Students are also told that this is not a survey they take for school grades. (See Administration Instructions, Appendix B.) Note, however, that students cannot be instructed to skip specific items on the survey as this interferes with the scoring and analysis of the report. Search Institute will not process surveys for students who have been given such instructions.

For more information regarding federal legislation on parent and student consent, see Appendix E.

CHOOSING THE SURVEY DATE

Several factors will influence when the survey administration should take place, including the length of time required for approval by key decision makers, amount of time needed for parental consent, and the school calendar.

Choose a time (1) that is not immediately following summer vacation or a major holiday period, (2) when the greatest percentage of students will be in school (not on a field trip or involved in a special program), (3) when it is most convenient for teachers to have the survey done in their classrooms, and (4) when it does not interfere with or conflict with other surveys being conducted with the same population.

Let all people potentially affected know the date well in advance. If several schools are involved in a study, coordinate times so that administration dates are within the same general time period (within two weeks, if possible).

SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS

For each classroom chosen to participate in the survey, the survey coordinator needs to designate a survey administrator. Most often survey administrators are classroom teachers or school counselors. You may also use volunteers or other school

personnel, but they should be comfortable in a classroom setting and able to maintain a serious atmosphere during survey administration.

If at all possible, the survey coordinator should provide an opportunity for survey administrators to get together and discuss both the administration procedures and the survey. If a meeting of this type is not possible, a copy of the survey and administration instructions should be distributed to survey administrators in advance of the survey date. An important element in the success of the survey process is helping survey administrators understand the importance of the survey itself, as well as the importance of following the survey administration procedure.

If the survey administrator is someone other than the classroom teacher, the coordinator may determine whether the teacher should also stay in the classroom.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each survey session/classroom, the survey coordinator provides to the survey administrator the following materials:

- Survey forms (1 per student);
- Pencils (#2 or softer; 1 per student);
- A large envelope (1 per classroom); and
- Administration instructions (1 per classroom, Appendix B).

In order to protect the anonymity of students, all survey forms are placed in the envelope at the end of the survey administration session. The envelope is sealed in front of the students and ultimately returned to Search Institute for processing.

If it is helpful to your check-in process, the survey coordinator may request that each survey administrator write the following information on the envelope:

- School name (if more than one is participating in the study);
- Survey administrator's name;
- Date;
- Subject and class period; and
- Grade level(s) in classroom.

This is particularly helpful and may be essential if more than one school is participating in the study. If more than one school participates and individual school reports are to be prepared, each envelope must be clearly marked with the school name. Also enclose a cover letter detailing the specific reports being requested.

IV. MAILING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

The final task is to collect all the envelopes from the survey administrators and ship them to Search Institute.

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

After all survey envelopes have been returned to the survey coordinator, he or she then needs to complete the two-sided Survey Administration Form. (Use the one enclosed in your original shipment from Search Institute or copy the form found in Appendix F.)

- Processing of your report will be delayed if the Survey Administration Form(s) is not included with your shipment.
- If individual school reports are to be generated, surveys must be separated and labeled. Also, enclose a cover letter detailing the specific reports being requested.

Place survey envelopes in one or more boxes and ship to Search Institute using a carrier that allows you to track your packages should they be lost in transit (e.g., UPS, certified mail, the carrier used by your school district). Make a copy of the Top Sheet (enclosed in your original shipment) and include inside each box.

Ship to Search Institute at the following address:

**Search Institute
The Banks Building
Attn: Survey Services Department
615 First Avenue N.E., Suite 125
Minneapolis, MN 55413**

Your report(s) will be mailed to the survey coordinator approximately 10 weeks after all completed surveys are received at Search Institute.

Note: As indicated on the classroom survey administration instructions, in order to maintain the confidentiality of student responses, survey forms are destroyed 90 days after they have been scanned. Requests to return completed survey forms to the school or other agency/individual will not be accommodated.

V. DISSEMINATION OF SURVEY DATA AND REPORT FINDINGS

Dissemination of survey data and report findings is at the discretion of the contracting party. The following information outlines Search Institute's commitment to maintaining confidentiality and the contractor's authority regarding dissemination of survey findings.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF SURVEY CLIENTS, DATA, AND REPORTS

Search Institute will treat all survey reports as confidential. The Institute will not release the names of organizations/schools that use the survey, raw data or copies of report(s) without prior written permission to do so. Because the data upon which the report is based can be used to advance the understanding of adolescent development, Search Institute reserves the right to add the data from your study to its larger Developmental Assets database.

DISSEMINATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS AND COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Your survey report (titled *Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth*) is copyrighted by Search Institute. You may photocopy and distribute your report in its entirety for informational and educational purposes. In addition, figures 1 through 19 may be reproduced or adapted to other formats (such as brochures, web sites, PowerPoint presentations) provided that Search Institute is cited as the source of the information and the developer of the framework of Developmental Assets.

The text and appendices contained in the full report may **not** be reproduced as part of any adaptations, mechanical or electronic.

The Executive Summary is also copyrighted by Search Institute. You may photocopy, adapt and distribute your Executive Summary in print and electronic formats for informational and educational purposes provided that Search Institute is cited as the source of the information and the developer of the framework of Developmental Assets.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

CHECKLIST FOR SURVEY COORDINATORS

*Search Institute Profiles of Student Life:
Attitudes and Behaviors*

Checklist for Survey Coordinators

The following checklist is intended to be used as a guide to assist survey coordinators in implementing the *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey. The numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers in the administration manual. While there are some basic and very important steps to follow when administering the survey, you may find that not all of these steps apply to your situation, or you may need to add additional steps. Extra space has been provided at the end of each section for that purpose. While there is an implied order in these steps, each community study will vary to some extent. Remember that it is very important to refer back to the administration manual for a more thorough explanation of the survey process.

Checklist for Implementation of the Attitudes and Behaviors Survey				
Steps for Implementation	School	School	School	Notes
Discussion/Buy-in/Approval for Survey Administration (These groups are suggestions. Some may not apply to your study, and/or you may need to add others.)				
Parent groups (PTA/PTO)				
Youth				
Accountability committees				
Local coalitions/task forces				
Faith institutions				
Law enforcement/government				
Business sector				
School board				
Superintendent(s)				
Principals				
Teachers				
<i>Other:</i>				
Parent Consent (Please refer to pages 10-12 and Appendix E in the administration manual. It will be important to determine whether or not parental consent is mandated at a federal, state or local level.)				
Decisions re: parent notification or consent				
Methods for notifying parents (letter, newsletter, consent form)				
Survey available for parent review				
Contact person assigned to answer questions from parents				
If needed: follow-up procedures determined				
<i>Other:</i>				
Sampling of Students (Although surveying the total population is preferable, sampling may be a more feasible option in some circumstances. Refer to pages 8-9 in the administration manual for further information. Search Institute will provide assistance in determining an adequate sample size.)				
Obtain student count by grade for each participating school				
Discuss options with Search Institute re: sampling by school, grade, classroom, roster				
Determine method for survey administration (e.g., by class subject, class period, etc.)				
<i>Other:</i>				

Logistics of Administration (Refer to the noted pages in the administration manual for further information.)				
Parent notification/permission performed (pg. 10-12 and Appendix C)				
Survey coordinator(s) recruited (pg. 8)				
Classroom teachers recruited/briefed (pg. 12 and Appendix B)				
Accommodations made for special needs students (ESL, LD) (pg. 9-10)				
Date(s) selected for administration (pg. 12)				
Pencils, envelopes, surveys provided to classroom administrators (pg. 13)				
Decisions made re: types of reports needed (e.g., by county, district, school building)				
Preparation made for shipping completed surveys to Search Institute (pg. 14)				
Other:				
Sharing survey results with others (Determine the audiences and methods for disseminating survey results. See Section V, page 15, Dissemination of Survey Data and Report Findings.)				
Audiences:				
Educators/administrators				
Parents				
Youth				
Committees				
Community leaders				
Faith institutions				
Media				
Community-at-large				
Other				
Methods:				
Town meeting(s)				
News media				
School newsletter/letter to parents				
School assembly				
Other:				

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

APPENDIX B

CLASSROOM ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors

Classroom Administration Instructions

Note: In a study of this kind, it is important to have a standardized administration format so that procedures are consistent across the study. Therefore, where verbal instructions are given below, try to give them as written. You may simplify language when appropriate.

Introductory Procedure

- 1) As quickly as possible after the class period begins, bring the class to attention. Students should be given about 50 minutes to complete the survey. Although many students may finish in less time, it is particularly important to allow students in lower grade levels adequate time for completing the survey.
- 2) If you are not the students' regular classroom teacher, introduce yourself (or be introduced by the teacher) and begin by saying:
 - *Our school is involved in a very important study of student attitudes and behaviors. The purpose of this study is to help our school and town better understand the needs of our young people. By taking this survey seriously and by answering honestly, you play an important role in this effort.*
 - *There are a couple of important things you need to know. The survey is filled out anonymously. This means there are no identification numbers on the survey and you should not put your name on the survey booklet. No one will know which survey booklet you filled out, and therefore no one can know how you answer these questions. Also the survey is voluntary which means you do not have to take it, and you may skip an item if you choose. This is not a test you take for school grades.*
 - *I will now give each of you a survey form. Please do not open it until I tell you to do so. Remember: The survey is not a test, and it is important that you answer the questions honestly.*
- 3) Then, ask the students to follow along as you read the two paragraphs on the front page of the survey.
 - *Your answers on this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. DO NOT put your name on this form. It has no code numbers, so no one will be able to find out how you or anyone else answered. Your school will receive a report that combines many students' answers together. Therefore, no one will be able to connect your answers with your name.*
 - *This is not a test you take for school grades. You are just being asked to tell about yourself, your experiences, and your feelings. Please be as honest as you can.*
- 4) When done reading the paragraphs, continue by saying:
 - *At the end of the class period, I will ask you to place your survey in this envelope [hold up the envelope]. Then I will seal the envelope. Neither I nor anyone else in this school will look at the surveys. They will be sent to Search Institute in Minneapolis. All of the surveys will be scored together to give an overall picture of our school. Then the surveys will be destroyed.*
 - *Look, now, at the section called "Important Marking Directions."*

5) Read these instructions aloud.

- Use black lead pencil only.
- Do NOT use ink or ballpoint pens.
- Make heavy black marks that fill the circle.
- Erase cleanly any answer you wish to change.
- Do not make any stray marks on the questionnaire.

6) Then say:

If you have any questions during the survey, raise your hand, and I will try to answer them. You have [# of] minutes to do the survey. If you finish early, remain in your seat and use your time to study. If you do not finish the survey, I will collect it anyway at the end of the period. You may begin.

Concluding Procedure

- 1) During the survey period, announce when there are 10 minutes remaining and when there are 5 minutes remaining.
- 2) Collect all surveys by the end of the period. When the bell rings, all survey forms should be in the envelope. Seal the envelope in front of the students. Do not make special arrangements for students to finish later or on their own. The hard and fast rule is to collect all forms by the end of the period.
- 3) After you seal the envelope, thank the class for its help.

Final Instructions

- 1) If requested by the survey coordinator, label the envelopes in the upper left-hand corner with the following information:
 - School name
 - Your name
 - Date
 - Class period and subject
 - Grade level(s) in classroom
- 2) **Return the envelope to the location designated by the survey coordinator.**

Additional Directions

- 1) If a student comes in late, you may let her or him take the survey if at least 20 minutes remain.
- 2) If a student does not want to take the survey, that is her or his right. Do not mandate participation. Your survey coordinator may have a designated room or location for nonparticipating students. If not, ask the student to study quietly at her or his desk.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE ACTIVE PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER
AND
SAMPLE PASSIVE PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER

Sample Active Parental Consent Letter

Note: This letter is intended to be placed on school letterhead. Information in [] is to be provided by the school.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

On [date], our school [district] will conduct a very important study on the needs, attitudes and behaviors of our students in grades [_____].

The survey is titled *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. It will provide our school and community with a wide range of information, such as how students spend their time, their perceptions of school and community life, and their participation in a wide range of risky behaviors. Most important, the survey will tell us the extent to which our students are experiencing Developmental Assets. Developmental Assets are the "building blocks" of positive relationships, opportunities, skills and values that young people need to grow into healthy caring, and responsible adults. The survey results will help all of us as we seek to address the developmental needs of our youth. [Give specifics about how the information will be used, how it will be shared with others, and/or information on your local Healthy Community • Healthy Youth initiative, if applicable.]

Additional information

- Students will be given one full class period in which to complete the survey. The surveys are completed anonymously. No one will know how individual students respond to the questions.
- All students within each classroom place their completed surveys into one envelope. The envelope is then sealed. All envelopes from our school are sent directly to Search Institute (Minneapolis) for processing. No one at our school will review any of the completed surveys.
- The final report will present findings by the total group, by grade, and by gender. No individual student data are reported.
- Students are told that their participation is voluntary and that they can skip items if they so choose.
- The survey is not a test they take for school grades, and their grades will not be affected if they choose not to participate. Nonparticipating students will be [e.g., asked to go to a study hall; asked to study quietly at their desk].

In order for your child to participate in the study, we must receive your signed consent. The form at the bottom of this page allows you to say yes or no to your child's participation. Please give serious consideration to this request. The value of a study of this kind depends upon the participation of every student. If no consent form is received from you, your child cannot participate in the study.

A copy of the survey is available for your review in the [location] between [days and time]. [A stamped envelope is provided for your convenience in returning this consent form.] Consent forms must be returned by [date]. If you have any questions, please contact [person and title] at [phone, days, times].

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Name
Title

Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in the *Attitudes and Behaviors* survey.

No, I do not give permission for my child to participate in the *Attitudes and Behaviors* survey.

Child's name (please print) _____ Grade level _____

School _____

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

Sample Passive Consent Letter For Parents

Note: This letter is intended to be placed on school letterhead. Information in [] is to be provided by the school.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

On [date], our school [district] will conduct a very important study on the needs, attitudes, and behaviors of our students in grades [_____].

The survey is titled *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*. It will provide our school and community with a wide range of information, such as how students spend their time, their perceptions of school and community life, and their participation in a wide range of risky behaviors. Most important, the survey will tell us the extent to which our students are experiencing Developmental Assets. Developmental Assets are the “building blocks” of positive relationships, opportunities, skills and values that young people need to grow into healthy caring, and responsible adults. The survey results will help all of us as we seek to address the developmental needs of our youth. [Give specifics about how the information will be used, how it will be shared with others, and/or information on your local Healthy Community • Healthy Youth initiative, if applicable.]

Additional information

- Students will be given one full class period in which to complete the survey. The surveys are completed anonymously. No one will know how individual students respond to the questions.
- All students within each classroom place their completed surveys into one envelope. The envelope is then sealed. All envelopes from our school are sent directly to Search Institute (Minneapolis) for processing. No one at our school will review any of the completed surveys.
- The final report will present findings by the total group, by grade, and by gender. No individual student data are reported.
- Students are told that their participation is voluntary and that they may skip items if they so choose.
- The survey is not a test they take for school grades, and their grades will not be affected if they choose not to participate. Nonparticipating students will be [e.g., asked to go to a study hall; asked to study quietly at their desk].

Please give serious consideration for your child to participate in this study. A copy of the survey is available for your review in the [location] between [days and time]. The value of a study of this kind depends upon the participation of every student.

If you do not want your child to participate, you **must** return the form at the bottom of this letter by [date]. If no form is received, your child will be asked to participate in the study.

If you have any questions, please contact [person] at [phone, days, times].

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Name _____
Title _____

Please withdraw my child from participation in the *Attitudes and Behaviors* survey.

Child's name (please print) _____ Grade level _____

School _____

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

Fact Sheet for Parents Regarding *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors*

Search Institute

Search Institute is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth, and communities. To accomplish this mission, Search Institute conducts research, develops publications and practical tools, and provides training and technical assistance. The Institute collaborates with others to promote long-term organizational and cultural change that supports the healthy development of all children and adolescents.

Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors Survey (A&B)

The A&B survey provides schools and communities with a portrait of the attitudes, behaviors, and needs of its youth. The survey has been administered in over 1000 communities and to well over 1 million students in urban, suburban, and rural settings. The survey contains 156 questions about school climate, parent and school boundaries and expectations, and structured time use, and a wide range of risky behaviors.

Common Concerns

Some of the questions parents may ask are these:

By taking the survey, will my child be encouraged to try some of the risk behaviors it addresses?

There is no evidence to indicate that asking questions about risk behaviors encourages young people to become involved in those behaviors. Also, there are many federal regulations specifically addressing the protection of people involved in research of all types, including survey research conducted in public school settings. Protection of parent and student rights is very important to Search Institute and we comply with all appropriate federal regulations. We also take great care to provide information about applicable federal regulations to any organization using our survey service.

How do you know whether students are answering truthfully?

Search Institute uses several methods for looking at each survey to determine whether students are answering truthfully. For example, the computer looks for inconsistencies in the way students respond to similar questions, unrealistically high substance use, and too many unanswered items. Surveys with these kinds of problems are not used in the report findings. The percentage of surveys removed from individual school or community studies has remained consistent over time and generally falls into the 5 to 8 percent range. When too many surveys are being eliminated, the resulting data may not be of good quality; and Search Institute may make the decision that a report cannot be generated.

Will anyone know how my child answers the questions?

Anonymity is a very important issue for surveys like this. In its 40 years of work in this area, Search Institute has created careful procedures to ensure that no student's results can be traced back to an individual student. Students do not put their names on the surveys and there are no hidden identification marks on the surveys. Thus, the surveys are completed anonymously.

As students complete their surveys, they place them in one envelope that is sealed at the end of the class period. The survey coordinator collects the envelopes from each class and ships them to Search Institute for analysis.

All findings are reported in aggregate form only by combining student responses by grade and by gender. No individual student responses are reported.

APPENDIX E

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES REGARDING PARENT CONSENT

Informational Resources Regarding Parent Consent

- Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco/>

- State Departments of Education, for example:
 - www.isbe.state.il.us/nclb/default.htm
 - www.cde.ca.gov/pr/nclb/
 - www.emsc.nysed.gov/deputy/nclb/
 - www.state.nj.us/njded/grants/nclb
 - www.pde.state.pa.us/nclb/site/default.asp

APPENDIX F

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION FORM

Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors Survey Administration Form

(This form must be returned with your completed surveys. Please keep a copy for your records.)

Survey Coordinator Information

Name _____ Title _____
 Org _____ Address _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____
 e-mail _____

School Representative Information (if different from above)

Name _____ Title _____
 School _____ Address _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____
 e-mail _____

Please provide the following information for each school participating in the survey.

School or Agency Name	City/Town	Zip	County	Grades in Building	Date Admin	Agency Type* (circle one)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pu Pr R N

What grade levels were surveyed?

(Check all that apply and provide estimated numbers.)

- Grade 6 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 7 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 8 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 9 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 10 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 11 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____
- Grade 12 Estimated # of students in grade _____ Estimated # surveyed _____

*Agency type:

Pu = Public school

Pr = Private, nonreligious school

R = Private, religious school

N = Nonschool agency

(over)

Which of the following methods did you use to select participants?

- All students surveyed in specified grades.
- Random sample of students
Describe method of randomly selecting students: _____

- Random sample of classrooms
Course(s) selected for survey administration: _____

Average number of classrooms selected per grade: _____
Describe method of randomly selecting classrooms: _____

Did you experience any difficulties in conducting the survey? (Check all that apply and fill in the blanks.)

- No
- High absenteeism in grade(s) _____ due to: _____

- Lack of student cooperation due to: _____
- Lack of teacher cooperation due to: _____
- Other: _____

Did you inform parents of the study and/or request signed consent forms?

- No notification/consent process was used.
- Yes, parents were informed of the survey administration.
Describe method used (e.g., newsletter, take-home letter): _____

- Yes, passive consent was used, in which parents were given the option of withdrawing their child from the study.
Grade level(s) for which passive consent was used: _____
Number of consent letters mailed: _____
Number of students withdrawn from the survey: _____
- Yes, active consent was required for students to participate.
Grade level(s) for which permission was required: _____
Number of consent letters mailed: _____
Number of students granted permission to participate: _____

<p>For Office Use Only: Date: _____ # of boxes returned: _____ # of un-opened packets returned: _____</p>

APPENDIX G

TOP SHEET

Top Sheet:

Please make a copy of this sheet to place inside each box in your shipment.

Box _____ of _____

Organization _____

Contact Name _____



Phone: 612-376-8955
Toll Free: 1-800-888-7828
Fax: 612-376-8956

Administration Manual
Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors

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