

Developmental assets in education

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The rate of growing awareness and evident usefulness of the developmental assets leaves the thinking human with only one option, to explore it. This piece tries to select from the forty listed three, which include: Caring School Climate, School Engagement and Achievement Motivation. Most of these pose as a form of indirect though highly effective helping. According to Dewey and Tufts (1908, 390), the best kind of help to others, whenever possible, is indirect, and consists in such modifications of the conditions of life, of the general level of subsistence, as enables them independently to help themselves. Most of these assets empower people to help themselves. We will carefully throw more light on these in this informative essay.

Caring School Climate — The School makes a caring and encouraging learning and playing environment available. An atmosphere that considers others above oneself, where each person takes responsibility for the good of others, reduces emotional clutters as it fosters free flow of constructive positive emotion. This asset is needed by both pupils and teachers because it builds a climate of trust, which serves as the foundation of good leadership. The essence of a good learning environment, however, is making useful contribution to society.

Education derives its full meaning when we are able to give of the much we have received back to others to make living easier thereby. A caring school climate is a potent tool that fosters sharing and good nurturing while scripting good habits into the being of all the people immersed in such a culture. It provides forgiving and giving to pupils and teachers alike, which is at the core of all form of significant lifestyle.

Lack of self-esteem is a product of learned helplessness. Introduction of a caring school climate will help build the proper estimation in pupils of themselves thereby curbing the occurrence of harmful practices.

The school can commit to building this caring climate by nurturing a culture that recognizes people on assembly grounds and in public places by their names and praises pupils' positive performance. Treat the negative practices as non-existent and speak highly of the positive ones. These will give rise to more of what is verbalized.

School Engagement — The School engages each young person actively in the endeavor to pass across knowledge. This often requires a deliberate exerting of influence. David Korten (1983, 220) terms it the "central paradox of social development: the need to exert influence over people for the purpose of building their capacity to control their own lives." The art of learning involves moving from the known familiar terrain to the unknown remote knowledge issues. In the bid to bridge the gap, the school makes use of varying useful alternatives that make use of the human input zones i. e. the five senses.

The more actively information is passed across through multiple channels the better for the learning pupils. Some students learn better through what they see while many others through their experiences. The more options a teacher engages in actively passing across message in creative ways the more the likelihood of delivering information in sustainable excellent ways. Schools should make use of words, pictures, videos, texts and animations in passing across knowledge to her pupils. Since the whole essence of learning is understanding school teachers need to be more focused on creative

techniques that actively engage the mind of the concerned pupils. Active learning holds the human attention p for longer periods.

A risk factor that could be strengthened is the encouragement of secrecy. Ill behavioral patterns grow in secrecy. Should a school encourage proper engagement of each pupil, openness will be fostered as each student gains the confidence to share their heart burdens with others who are ready to help. Education is a total sum that must not be isolated.

A useful activity that will promote the school engagement is the introduction of instructive games in the explanation of complex course modules. This may be a little tough but will help a lot of pupils see the fun side of learning as they reach new levels of understanding thereby.

Achievement Motivation — Schools will need to help their pupils create and meetgoalsthat give them a sense of fulfillment on realization. The use of class positions is not entirely bad in itself; however, some more motivations need to be built into the learning system. Learning ought to be fun and that all the time. It will be observed that young people in the kindergarten enjoy learning more than those in the higher classes. This could be traced to the fact that they look forward to the fun of learning as each day approaches. Simple gift items and awards could be introduced to the normal school systems.

This, where used, makes learning worth the effort to those who receive them and others who yearn to have such. The direction of learning also should be made to traverse the major life skills, not just academics, so as to enhance robust success. Schools need to introduce rewards first on a general level

and then for special performances and behavioral patterns. The general reaffirms the confidence of each pupil, while the special places demand on their ability development. Rewarding good behavior will likely promote more of its occurrences.

Students who under-perform do so primarily because of their levels of confidence. Pupils need to be helped to believe in themselves when it relates to learning new things. Helping students have a sense of drive towards achievement reduces the risk of failing with low grades for such students. Under-performance is not the core challenge but knowing how to combat it is more pertinent. Student who under-perform fall into one of several categories. Some have given up trying while others are not enjoying the fact that there is only one goal everyone strives to get. Increasing the opportunities for a sense of achievement for students will definitely promote better grades on end, but good grades should not be the sole motivation for all students in a class.

To foster achievement motivation the school can provide plaques and certificates to reward punctuality, students' attempt to answer teachers' question and cleanliness. People who try and fail in life are better of than those who never make an attempt. Hence schools should find creative ways to encourage and reward attempts.

My personal philosophy of education is "Adding Value to Others". I believe strongly that education cannot be said to be complete until the student has been guided to give back - contribute. From its Latin origin, 'educos' the root word from which education flowed out stands for 'outflow'. Hawkins (2000, 44) says that if we ask how the teacher- learner roles differ

from those of master and slave, the answer is that the proper aim of teaching is precisely to affect those inner processes that...cannot in principle be made subject to external control, for they are just, in essence, the processes germane to independence, to autonomy, to self-control. These virtues: independence, self-control and freedom are at the core of every truly educated mind and foster the habit of giving. This in essence means that the intrinsic purpose of learning is giving. Hence the developmental assets contribute thus:

Developmental assets take on a holistic perspective to learning while it seeks to integrate learning as a societal cultural value; and the interest of others as of higher priority than ours.

These assets will contribute in enormous ways at all levels of the human development. These levels include primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. Each of the asset shows a continued two-way contributory flow of support i. e. the society adds value to pupil and vice versa.

Developmental Assets are natural and not some high-sounding artificial concoctions. If implemented consciously, they will transform the educational systems while turning our societal environment into conscious positively charged value adding cultures.

Developmental assets will bring more meaning to pupils learning and education as it places others above self, and in retrospect true meaningful living.

Developmental assets flow with intrinsic positive energies, which if carefully imbibed returns great dividends to all who experience its effects.

In all developmental assets enrich the pupil, family, school, neighborhood and the larger community. If learned consciously with close attention, these assets have the intrinsic potential to revolutionize education through the creation of a holistic and integrated system.

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