Student Leadership Services Inc.

Characteristics of Asset Building Youth-Led Prevention Programs of Student Leadership Services, Inc.

Students Leading Students High School Chapters SLS State Student Advisory Board Middle School STAND
Peer Trainings Go Big! Elementary Program Alumni Volunteers

1. A mission rooted in developmental assets is communicated to all SLS members and potential members.
2. All members understand their personal capacity to promote developmental assets and prevention messages.
3. Most members take personal responsibility.
4. Most members are engaged to take action.
5. New members are quickly educated about the group's vision.
6. Members know or are learning the developmental assets and principles of effective prevention.
7. Most members take action to promote asset development for themselves and for their peers. Members participate.
8. The student-led chapter thinks and acts intergenerationally. Most adult advisors establish sustained relationships with their students and most adolescents establish sustained relationships with younger children. (Ex.: PRS and STAND) *
9. Youth in SLS programs have many opportunities for active youth participation to lead, make decisions, and give input; SLS students are provided useful roles in school and community life. SLS youth lead in the school and community.
10. SLS students frequently engage in service to others and enlist other youth in that effort. SLS youth share responsibility with and are guided by adults in these service-learning efforts.
11. The Mission, Vision and Purpose and Beliefs of SLS programs have been named.
12. Advisors model and articulate their values.
13. Common core of boundaries have been named. (Purpose and Beliefs; Mission Statement; Constitution; By-laws).
14. Adults model and articulate these boundaries.
15. Members discuss and come to a common understanding of the behavior that adheres to these boundaries.
16. Members are supported, taught and equipped to elevate youth development and asset building to top priority. Advisors facilitate this process.
17. School and community programs planned by SLS youth assist adults to become active contributors to youth development. SLS adults are trained in youth development, asset development and prevention.

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18. Faculty advisors, school staff, community members and SLS staff build caring relationships with youth and express their caring through dialogue, listening, affirming positive behavior, acknowledging their presence, enjoying their company, and involving them in decision making. Youth are real people known and respected by adults.*
19. Businesses that sponsor, support or employ SLS students address the assets of support, boundaries, values, and social competencies. Businesses develop relationships with youth.
20. Religious institutions use their capacity for educating and supporting youth and parents in their membership and the greater community. SLS youth use religious facilities for events, programs, service projects and awareness campaigns. SLS youth incorporate SLS prevention strategies into youth groups to which they belong.
21. Schools-elementary through secondary, public, private and parochial – place priority on creating a caring environment for all students, providing a challenging and engaging youth development and prevention curriculum for all students, providing opportunities for nurturing values, supporting and strengthening SLS chapter activities, and using their connections with parents to reinforce the importance of family attention to positive youth development and asset building.
22. SLS trains adult leaders and student leaders in asset building strategies and SLS provides meaningful opportunities for youth to participate and serve their school and the community and build citizenship and leadership skills.*
23. Local governments are encouraged to focus on positive youth development, asset building and prevention as top priorities for planning, policies and funding allocation. Local governments acknowledge and seek out cooperation of SLS student-led groups.
24. SLS continues to expand its system of youth-led programs, events and networks. SLS is consistent, adheres to researched principles of prevention, while continuing to be visionary in programming.
25. Virtually all Michigan High schools offer or have offered a SLS group or Safety group. SLS groups are inclusive and reach out to involve all students in their mission of positive self development. SLS groups enlist the participation of other youth groups in the school and community.
26. All SLS advisors receive on-going training, support, materials, mentoring in asset building, positive youth development and prevention.
27. SLS values cultural strengths and traditions in local youth-led chapters and statewide events and programming. Understanding and affirming these strengths builds relationships and supports inclusiveness which is core to the Purpose and Beliefs of SLS.*

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28. Youth in SLS groups have safe places to be, such as the advisor's office, classroom, or the office designated for students. Youth "drop in" to the SLS office and gather, eat and help out. There is a feeling of youth "ownership" of the SLS office and everything to do with the SLS network.
29. All SLS students receive frequent expressions of support by SLS staff, alumni, advisors and affirmation in both public settings and informal gatherings. Awards are plentiful and recognized often.*
30. Communities celebrate the students and chapter for taking action. SLS advisors and Alumni volunteers have high status in the state network, school and community.*
31. SLS statewide commitment to asset building, positive youth development and prevention is long-term (27 years in 2009) and inclusive.
32. SLS pays particular attention to engaging all youth, and facilitating a sense of personal control and mastery, a sense of contribution and importance, high expectations, and an understanding of their ability to be a resource to themselves and others.*
33. Compassion and caring are inherent in all SLS students, advisors and staff. SLS offers opportunities to communicate and demonstrate that caring for others.*
34. All SLS programs intentionally build assets. Every aspect of the SLS organizational structure and programming are dedicated to positive youth development, building assets, and prevention. This is and has been the purpose of SLS since 1982. SLS offers trainings which focus on developing specific assets. Chapter activities generally focus on developing several assets and different assets for individual youth that are involved. SLS and committed advisors share and cooperate in this effort.

*These characteristics are correlated further in "Prevention in Practice" © 1999, 2009 by Pamela Voss-Page which synthesizes youth development, asset development, and prevention principles in the science-based strategies of Student Leadership Services, Inc.

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