



## What is Project Cornerstone?

Project Cornerstone was founded in 1999 after a survey showed that most youth in Santa Clara County are missing the positive relationships, opportunities, values, and skills—known collectively as “developmental assets”—that provide the foundation for a healthy, successful future. In general, the more developmental assets that young people possess, the more likely they are to avoid risky behaviors and engage in positive, healthy activities. Project Cornerstone’s mission is to train and mobilize adults throughout Santa Clara County to intentionally work to develop healthy, caring, and responsible children and youth. We seek to achieve this mission through programs that strengthen families, neighborhoods, communities, and schools, and by ensuring that young people’s needs are addressed in public policy. Project Cornerstone has been recognized for our contribution to the City of San José being named as one of the 100 best communities for young people by America’s Promise. For more information, visit [www.projectcornerstone.org](http://www.projectcornerstone.org).

## What Does Project Cornerstone Do in Schools?

Project Cornerstone’s School Partnerships program empowers young people, parents, and school staff to improve school climate and generate ways to keep children healthy and safe. Our in-school programs include:

- **Bullying and Peer-Abuse Prevention Workshops:** Considered to be the most prevalent kind of violence in schools, bullying has serious academic and health outcomes for both victims and bullies. To help schools address this issue, Project Cornerstone facilitates half-day workshops to develop student leadership skills, promote healthy behaviors, and reduce bullying on campus. Workshops are held with a team of diverse students identified by school staff. At the end of the workshop, students create an action plan to promote a healthier, safer school climate. Follow-up coaching is provided to the students throughout the year to help ensure that their action plan is fully realized.
- **ABC (Asset Building Champions):** In this program, adult volunteers are trained in strategies for creating positive, healthy connections with their own children and youth in the community, and are prepared to volunteer at schools reading specially selected books and leading classroom activities that illustrate making healthy choices, peaceful conflict resolution, family support, and more.
- **Cultural Heritage Asset Programs (CHAPs):** In CHAPs programs, which are similar to the *ABC* program, adult volunteers are trained to read specially selected books and lead activities related to their cultural heritage in the classroom. CHAPs includes the popular Spanish-language *Los Dichos de la Casa* program, and opens new doors for parents from diverse cultures to support their children’s school success as well as the healthy development of all young people in their communities. Other CHAPs programs support Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and Indian cultures.

Project Cornerstone also delivers training and consultation to teachers, administrators, and staff on building developmental assets in young people and preventing bullying and peer abuse, and facilitates service-learning programs, peer-helper programs, and other special projects. One San José middle school that has worked with Project Cornerstone to implement asset-building strategies consistently for five years saw the following impacts on survey and test scores:

- A significant 23-point increase in their academic performance index (API) score
- Decrease in 20 out of 24 risk-taking behaviors such as substance abuse, fighting, and truancy
- An 81 percent increase in the number of students who stated on a survey that they believe they have a caring school climate

Project Cornerstone achieved the following results in during the 2007-08 academic year:

- The School Partnerships program trained more than 1,300 adult volunteers to participate in school-based parent engagement programs. The English-language Asset Building Champions (ABC) program reached more than 17,000 children; the Spanish-language *Los Dichos* program reached more than 5,500 children; and programs supporting Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and Indian cultures reached 1,400 children.
- More than 2,200 students participated in *Expect Respect* peer abuse and bullying prevention workshops.
- More than 2,400 teachers were trained in ways to better connect with students and address bullying on campus with the goal of creating caring school climates where all students are supported and encouraged to achieve and thrive.