

Lake Cities Focus

Survey Project

In Partnership with the Search Institute®

What is Lake Cities Focus?

Lake Cities Focus is a nonprofit organization created from the desire of community members from Corinth, Hickory Creek, Lake Dallas, and Shady Shores to strengthen families. The mission of Lake Cities Focus is to strengthen families through communication, activities, and education in the midst of pandemics, stress, and other uncertainties. Its board is comprised of the four mayors and city managers of the Lake Cities, the CEO of the United Way of Denton County, church pastors, representatives from other nonprofits, and several other community members.

The first project that Lake Cities Focus is working on is identifying the needs of local middle school and high school students, and then developing programs to meet those needs. One of the ways this can be done is through identifying which Developmental Assets local students currently possess and lack. Developmental Assets are 40 internal and external characteristics and strengths students can have. These can include honesty, sense of responsibility, participation in community organizations, and serving others. Studies have shown that for students to be successful in school and life they need to possess at least 20 Developmental Assets. If they have less, they may be more likely to take part in risky behavior, and struggle with maintaining mental and physical health.

The number of Developmental Assets students possess can increase through having strong, mentor-like relationships with adults in their lives. These types of relationships can be referred to as Developmental Relationships. As part of its first project, Lake Cities Focus would like to help parents, teachers, pastors, coaches, and other adults strengthen these existing relationships with students in their lives. Aspects of Developmental Relationships include expressing care, challenging growth, providing support, sharing power, and expanding possibilities.

Lake Cities Focus is partnering with the Search Institute to conduct survey research to identify which Developmental Assets local middle school and high school students tend to possess or lack. These trends can help determine if local students may be susceptible to mental and physical health concerns (e.g. anxiety, depression), or engaging in risky behavior (e.g. using drugs, violence).

Why are the surveys being used?

The surveys measure trends that local students have regarding Developmental Assets, including their strengths, supports, and other social-emotional factors vital for student success. These surveys are needed because the strengths and supports that students have vary between different communities and regions. For instance, students residing in the suburban Lake Cities region are in a different cultural area, and have access to different resources, than many students in inner cities. Programs in Dallas may make positive differences in the lives of Dallas students and their families, but the same programs may not be useful for students in the Lake Cities. Lake Cities Focus wants to custom tailor our programs to fit our community needs.

What questions do the surveys ask?

The survey will ask questions to help measure which Developmental Assets students possess. Example questions include asking students if they “stand up for what I believe in,” “feel good about myself,” “express my feelings in proper ways,” “feel valued and appreciated by others,” and “feel safe at school.” The survey should only take about 10 minutes to complete.

I don't want my children's personal information collected. Should I be concerned?

The surveys are completely anonymous and no individually identifiable data will be collected. The survey will not ask for names, home addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, what schools the students attend, or similar information. There will be no way for Lake Cities Focus or its board members to trace specific answers to individual participants or their households. The survey will ask demographic questions regarding grade, age, gender, and race/ethnicity.

What will be done with the data?

Researchers at the Search Institute will analyze the data, identify trends, and create a report. Researchers will present the report to Lake Cities Focus and interested community leaders. The report will describe what Developmental Assets students in the Lake Cities area are most likely to have, least likely to have, and what problems local students are most likely to be susceptible to.

Lake Cities Focus will then invite a facilitator from the Search Institute to lead a community-wide workshop. Parents, teachers, coaches, pastors, and other interested adults in the Lake Cities area will be invited to attend free of charge. The workshop can have hundreds of attendees. The facilitator will present the data report, discuss the issues that local students are most likely to encounter, and suggest possible solutions. The attendees will discuss the information and decide what interventions or programs to implement.

Do my children have to participate in the survey?

Participation in the survey is optional. Parents may withdraw their consent for minors under their care to take the survey, and students should not be forced or coerced to take the survey. Students do not have to start the survey, or complete it once started. However, participation is highly encouraged. The accuracy of the data results depends on the number of students who participate. In other words, if there are not enough completed surveys, then the data results will not be useful.

Where can I go for more information?

More information about Lake Cities Focus and this project can be found at cityofcorinth.com/lakecitiesfocus . You may contact Lake Cities Focus at 940-498-3243 or focusinfo@cityofcorinth.com .

More information about the Search Institute and the surveys can be found at www.searchinstitute.org .

If you do not want to allow your child to participate in the survey, complete and submit the attached refusal form.

Lake Cities Focus Parent Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

From April 19th to June 28th, Lake Cities Focus will be conducting a research survey of our community's middle and high school students. The results will help us work together to help young people succeed and thrive.

The survey is titled the *Developmental Assets Profile*. The survey focuses on the strengths and supports that youth have and need in their lives. This survey will help our organization work with you to ensure that the students we work with have the opportunities they need to be successful in life. The survey focuses on young people's own perceptions of their strengths. It does not ask more sensitive questions about potential high-risk behaviors.

Overview of Key Points

- The survey is not a test. It is a survey of your child's experience and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.
- There are no consequences if your child chooses not to participate.
- The survey will be completed online and will take less than 10 minutes to complete.
- The survey is anonymous. Your student's name will never be attached to his/her responses.
- Participation is completely voluntary. You may refuse participation on behalf of your child and your child can skip items if they so choose and end their participation at any time.
- The survey asks about young people's own experiences and ideas as well as some information about themselves (e.g. age, gender, race-ethnicity).
- Other than some possible discomfort with some questions, there are no risks to participating in this study. Your student will be told of his/her right to skip any question he/she does not want to answer.
- There is no compensation for participating in this research. However, key overall findings will be shared with families and others who are interested in ensuring that young people have the supports they need in their lives.
- A copy of the survey will be available for your review in the Corinth City Manager's office, located on the second floor of Corinth City Hall (3300 Corinth Pkwy, Corinth, TX 76208) on Mondays and Tuesdays from 8:00am – 5:00pm, and Wednesdays from 8:00am – 3:00pm. If none of these times work for you, please call or e-mail Katherine Lindsey to arrange a time to meet in-person or through Zoom.

The value of a study of this kind depends upon the participation of many youth. We hope you will encourage and allow your student to participate. In doing so, they will help strengthen the supports for students in the Lake Cities area.

If you **DO NOT** your child to participate, you **MUST** complete and return the form on the back of this letter by June 1st, 2021. If no form is received, your child will be invited to participate in the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Lindsey at 940-498-3243 or Katherine.Lindsey@cityofcorinth.com. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Katherine Lindsey, LBSW
City of Corinth Staff Liaison

**Developmental Assets Profile
Participation REFUSAL Form**

By completing and returning the form below, I am **withdrawing** my child from participating in the Developmental Assets Profile.

Student's name: (please print) _____

Parent of Guardian's name: (please print) _____

Parent or Guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____

Return completed form directly to Lake Cities Focus at:

Corinth City Hall, City Manager's Office
3300 Corinth Pkwy, Corinth, TX 76208

or electronically at focusinfo@cityofcorinth.com

If your student is taking part in an organization that is facilitating survey distribution, then you can submit the completed form to your organization leaders.