

## Developing Healthy, Happy Teens

At Cumberland Hall, our goal is healthy, happy teens. We realize that there are many struggles our teenagers and parents face in today's society. Pressures at school, financial stress, and relationship problems...all of these lead to challenges for today's families. All teens face these pressures. **In fact, one in four adolescents will face a mental health crisis sometime in their middle or high school years.** We hope to offer you guidance and assistance when you don't know where to turn for help. If your teen is struggling, call us for a **free assessment** at (423)499-9007. We're here to help!

We would also like to share a website with some great information on developing healthy, happy teens. An organization called the Search Institute has extensively researched the development of youth and has identified 40 key assets that every teen needs to be successful. Their research indicates that the more assets an adolescent has, the less likely to engage in risky behaviors and the more likely to thrive in life. These assets include relationships, opportunities and personal qualities that will help them become successful.

One of the 40 Developmental Assets is "**Positive Family Communication.**" This asset means that the teenager is able to effectively communicate with parents and is willing to seek out advice or counsel from parents. Wouldn't we all like to communicate more effectively with our teen? Take the time to get to know your teenager. Ask him/her questions about likes and dislikes. Get to know their friends. Be available when they need to talk. Make sure that you are offering a safe environment for them to communicate with you. When they talk, really listen. Turn off the Blackberry, laptop or car radio and LISTEN. It's hard to do in our fast-paced environment, but it is vital to establishing positive family communication.

For a complete list of assets, go to [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org) .