

JUNXION

FOR RESIDENTS, BY RESIDENTS

First String

Harpist Gillian Grassie strikes a chord with her modern sound and soulful lyrics



Also Inside:

Life Coach Julie Gates' guide to setting and keeping your New Year's goals

Boutique owner Stephanie Harmeson's four steps to a perfectly curated closet

Sue Walter's healthy and delicious Super Bowl Sunday buffalo cauliflower dip

raising
great
kids

By resident
and education
specialist Perk
Musacchio

Bank on Them

Start the new year of
parenting out right with
a review of education
specialist Perk Musacchio's
ABC's for raising children

Assets are defined as property owned by a person or company that has value and is available to meet debts, commitments, or legacies. We think about building our assets as a way of establishing present and future financial security, but did you know there are other kinds of assets that provide lifelong security and stability but just in a different way? I learned about them when my husband and I were raising three teenagers and sometimes felt like nothing we said or did mattered. However, we were wrong. There are actually 40 developmental assets that provide opportunities and build relationships that young people need to be healthy, caring, and responsible human beings. And ... the good news is that many of them are things that **YOU**, the parent, can provide. In fact, you are probably doing many of them already.

All kids need to be surrounded by adults who care for, appreciate, and accept them. Loving adults model healthy lifestyles, social skills, self-control, positive communication, and responsible behavior. And yes, your children do notice!

Boundaries and expectations need to be provided at home and in school. Kids need rules and logical consequences that are reasonable, clear, and consistently reinforced. This structure provides a sense of predictability and comfort.

Chores and contributions to the family create responsibility, competence, independence, and a sense of belonging. Kids are quite capable of making their bed, setting the table, feeding the family pet, putting away toys and clothes, and doing other household tasks. They may need to be taught how, and their attempt may not be as good as yours, but that **is** okay.

Decision making is a lifelong skill, so help your child think through and plan school, play, and home activities.

Empower your children, so they feel valued and valuable. This happens when kids feel safe and respected.

Forgive others. Teach your children how to apologize, how to forgive, and then move on.

Go outside and enjoy the benefits of time spent in nature.

Honesty is a character trait that needs to be modeled and taught. It's important that we own our mistakes and fess up. Mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn.

Imagination makes all things possible. Encourage your child's creativity and exploration of whatever interests him. One never knows where that interest will lead.

Joy is the new currency, as stated by local designer David Ferron. We all need joy in our lives.

Kindness and empathy are gifts parents can give their kids. Lead by example.

Life is better when there is more listening than speaking and lots of laughter.

Make time. Time to relax. Time to listen. Time to have fun. Time together as a family.

Neighborhoods, schools, and FAMILY help children experience warm and secure relationships and provide a sense of belonging.

Open hearts and minds create a loving world.

Positive family communication and involvement show your children that you respect and value them and what they do. Attend school and extracurricular events. Check those backpacks and support homework, as needed. Spend time sharing opinions, feelings, and the day's news.

Question. Encourage your children to ask questions because critical thinking and learning are forever.

Religious communities and activities provide caring relationships that nurture children's spiritual development. Pray together as a family.

Service to others is a great way to develop empathy and lift your spirits and "fill your bucket."

Traditions are the ties that bind and create memories of a lifetime.

U ... your **presence** more than your **presents**.

Values are important. Help your children find theirs.

Words of encouragement mean the world to your child.

XOXOXO Tell your children you love them every single day.

Yet. Always remember the power of yet. I can't read ... yet. I can't play the violin ... yet. I'm not tall enough to go on the roller coaster ... yet.

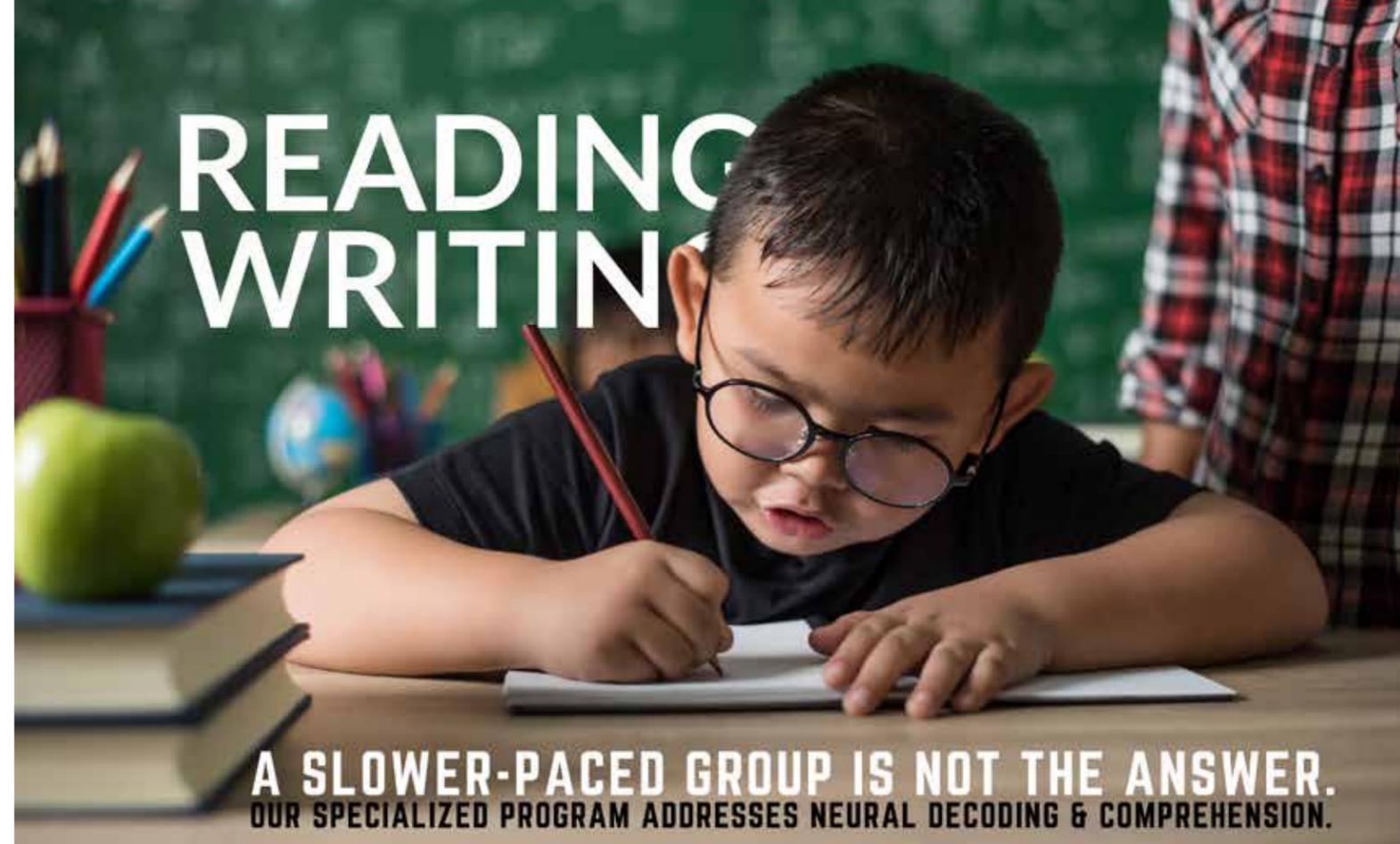
Zzzz Everyone needs a good night's sleep (and sometimes a nap) to recharge their batteries!

The encouraging news for parents is this: What we do or say does matter even if we don't see it at the present time. If you provide these assets or "protective factors" when raising your children, you are providing them with the inner strength, moral compass, and skills to avoid dangerous situations and choices. You do matter. You do make a difference. Just remember your ABCs.

Perk Musacchio is the co-author of *No Manual, No Problem: Strategies and Interventions to Help Your Child Thrive in Today's World*, where many of these strategies and more can be found. She is also co-author of *A Student's Guide to Communication and Self-Presentation* and the originator of the PeaceWalk®. For more information, visit her website at www.skillstosoar.com.

For more information on developmental assets, visit <https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/>.

For a great read-aloud to share with your children, check out *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* but Carol McCloud



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-Peter, Grade 3 Student

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