

## Gifts of Gratitude

By Tri-Town Council staff

Hot cider, cookies, letters to Santa and Gifts of Gratitude? You will find all of these at our office (49 Main Street, Topsfield) during Topsfield's Annual Holiday Walk on Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup>. Please stop by the TTC office between 4-7pm to warm up, meet our youth group, write a letter to Santa and share who and what you value about our towns as part of a caring community project, Gifts of Gratitude.

TTC is happy to get those "Gifts of Gratitude" started in this season of giving thanks! We are grateful to have the good fortune of fulfilling our mission to support youth and families in towns which value our kids! Our mission calls us "to reduce and prevent at-risk behavior and strengthen the social and emotional well-being of Tri-Town youth." A tall order, to say the least, but we see people coming together every day for the benefit of each other and our children.

Our mission calls us to noble intentions, but how do we ensure that these intents are turned into action? What is our barometer for success in confirming we, as a community, supports not just our kids but all our neighbors? Over the past year, the work of TTC has been guided by the internationally-known Search Institute. The Search Institute teaches all of us – parents, professionals, religious leaders, youth - about the "40 Developmental Assets" – and how these 40 Assets connect to families and communities fostering healthy, vibrant, and resilient kids.

Forty, you ask? Forty Assets? Truly, these are simple, yet meaningful, reminders of what it takes for all of us – and especially our youth – to feel buoyed and valued. Assets bring forth tremendous return on investment with easy gestures; regular family dinners or taking the time to simply say hello to kids in your neighborhood or church, and calling them by name. It's saying thanks to the teen that bags your groceries. It's engaging in everyday acts of kindness, such as reaching out a senior who needs help with snow shoveling - and having your kids help, too, so they can contribute and learn from such acts of kindness and respect. It's asking your child what the best part of his day was and really listening to the answer. These are seemingly effortless actions which can be forgotten in the daily bustle, but can harvest lasting results. TTC, moving forward within these 40 Developmental Assets, encourages all in the Tri-Town to become an Asset Builder (you probably already are one)! Together, we will continue to foster a caring community that will nurture resilience and confidence in our kids!

To learn more about the 40 Developmental Assets, check out the [Search Institute](#). For more on TTC, go to [Tri-Town Council](#) or [Like us on Facebook](#) for great resources for your family and kids of all ages.

We look forward to seeing all of you on December 1<sup>st</sup> – Santa letter-writing awaits for the young ones, and young and old alike are invited to share in our Gifts of Gratitude project. If you can't make it on the 1<sup>st</sup> and want to learn more about this and other community projects, please give us a call to set up a time to stop in. Happy Thanksgiving!