

# THE COMPASS ADVANTAGE™

## EIGHT PATHWAYS TO EVERY CHILD'S SUCCESS

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The handout and discussion guide on the following page was prepared to help parents, educators, and community leaders discuss ways they help young people cultivate an internal compass as depicted in the model, The Compass Advantage™. It is designed to be printed on 11"X 17" paper.

There are many ways to lead discussions with the handout. You can use the questions at the bottom of the handout or design your own. The purpose is to shift from conversations that focus on problems with kids to the kinds of adult support that provide a foundation for young people's success and well-being.

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Please contact Dr. Marilyn Price-Mitchell from the Roots of Action website at [www.RootsofAction.com](http://www.RootsofAction.com) if you have any questions. You can also find additional resources there, including articles related to the strengths on the Internal Compass, and how we develop these strengths in children and teens. These articles are available to be freely reprinted in school and nonprofit newsletters. See [reprint permission guidelines](#).

## IMPACT RESILIENCE

- Push kids gently to the edges of their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical comfort zones.
- Encourage them to make sustained commitments to activities of their own choice – community service, sports, music, art, and other after-school activities.
- Give youth encouragement and support as they learn to take risks, overcome challenges, and grow from failure.
- Praise them for their initiative, persistence, and grit.
- Let kids know you believe in them and their abilities.

## IMPACT INTEGRITY

- Treat children and teens with respect and dignity.
- Listen to their feelings and concerns without judgment.
- Help kids identify their own strengths of character by praising them for their courage, honesty, and fairness — not just for grades and external accomplishments.
- Model internal strengths, like integrity, humility, and open-mindedness.
- Discuss the traits of heroes and heroines in movies, TV, and books —and the consequences of their actions.

## IMPACT RESOURCEFULNESS

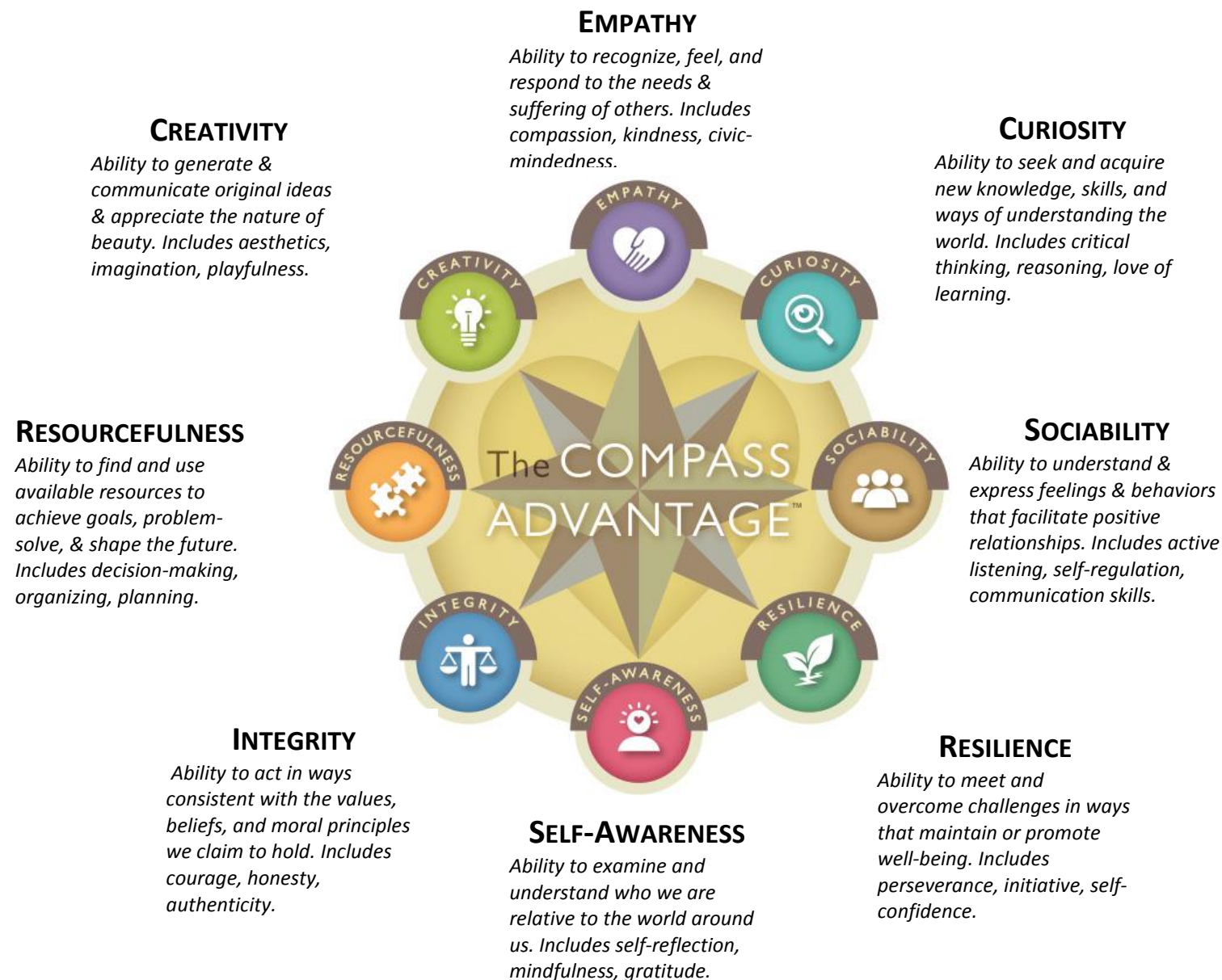
- Help kids see themselves as strategic thinkers and achievers who accomplish goals through hard work.
- Ask them to rephrase problems as questions, and then seek to discover possible answers.
- Involve youth in communities, doing research, sharing ideas, and contributing to decision making.
- Set high expectations and support children's abilities to accomplish goals.
- Teach them to be adaptable, to live without rigid rules or preconceived ideas.

## IMPACT CREATIVITY

- Give children plenty of unstructured play time.
- Foster a relationship with nature and the outdoors.
- Engage kids in music, the arts, and reading.
- Praise them when they think outside the box, take risks, and show curiosity. Ask, "How might you...?"
- Encourage youth to express themselves through writing, poetry, acting, photography, and digital media.

# Eight Pathways to Every Child's Success

Children and adults discover heart-felt meaning and direction in life when they develop strong internal compasses. This guidance system is formed during childhood and adolescence, through relationships and life experiences — and continues to evolve throughout life. Explore the eight points of the compass below. Then, use the adjacent columns as examples of how to impact the development of these abilities in children and teens.



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How do our families, schools, and community organizations help young people cultivate these abilities? What other ways do we facilitate learning in each of these core areas? How can we do better?

## IMPACT CURIOSITY

- Help children identify questions that pique their curiosity.
- Allow them to struggle and experience setbacks.
- Teach young people to be skeptics, to require more evidence before accepting someone's claims as true.
- Praise them for effort, critical thinking, and an ability to engage their values when making decisions.
- Help children see how parts connect and influence the whole of society — that learning occurs through relationships, collaboration, and flexibility.

## IMPACT SOCIABILITY

- Help kids understand that the words they choose make a difference to the relationships they create.
- Talk with young people about their motivations and mental states so they can articulate them to others.
- Help children avoid negative first impulses by thinking through alternative reactions to difficult situations.
- Encourage youth to role play uncomfortable social situations to improve adaptability and self-confidence.
- Check for understanding when talking with kids and encourage them to do the same with others.

## IMPACT EMPATHY

- Create emotional attachments with children and teens, ensuring they are seen, felt, and understood.
- Provide opportunities for kids to know people with different worldviews and life experiences.
- Introduce young children to service, helping them understand their roles in helping others.
- Encourage teens to push their emotional boundaries through more challenging volunteer service.
- Talk with kids about the meaning that results when they put empathy and compassion into action.

## IMPACT SELF-AWARENESS

- Help kids recognize, differentiate, and attend to their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical selves.
- Engage them in conversations about values, beliefs, attitudes, and moral dilemmas.
- Bring meaning to kids' lives by helping them reflect about whom they are and what they care about.
- Encourage habits of mindfulness, like meditation, yoga, and other practices that involve body awareness.
- Foster young people's abilities to connect self-awareness to action in the world.