



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LWV SLP And Children First Build Partnership

Representing the LWV SLP, Deb Brinkman recently participated in the Children First Asset Champion training conducted by Karen Atkinson of the St. Louis Park Children First program.

Deb Brinkman is an active member of LWV SLP, serving as Vice President and Voter Editor. She also helped found the LWV SLP Scholarship program through the Dollars for Scholars program at St. Louis Park High School.

The Children First program was initiated after Carl Holmstrom's "It Takes A Village" speech to the Rotary Club. For generating community activity, Carl and community leaders did not dictate what needed to be done, but asked "What can you do?" Carl's speech inspired the community to focus their efforts on making a difference to youth in our community.

Funded through donations, the Children First program contracted with Search Institute that determined that the more 'Assets' a child has, the more likely the child is to succeed. The Search Institute developed 40 assets targeting school-aged children. These assets are communicated, supported and applied through school, after school and faith-based youth programs.

In the four hour training session, attendees were briefed on the inception of the Children First initiative, reviewed several statistics as they related to St. Louis Park children and were introduced to the 40 assets. Many of us already apply behaviors to support assets. Trainers encouraged us to intentionally apply these behaviors. Supplementing the assets is the SPARK concept. SPARK encourages an individual, child or adult, to actively engage in an activity related to their passion.

Commenting on the Children First program, Deb said, "The Children First initiative's continued success is driven by acceptance and application by the entire St. Louis Park community. It has become part of the St. Louis Park culture – unlike a project that has a defined start and a defined end."

Asset Champion training is encouraged for anyone who engages with St. Louis Park youth. To become a Children's First Asset Champion, contact Karen Atkinson. There is no charge for the training.

LWV is a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in LWV is open to men and women of all ages. With more than 90 years of experience and 800 local and state affiliates, LWV is one of America's most trusted grassroots organizations.