

Keys to Your Security and Prosperity

Ask any successful businessperson to list the ingredients necessary for turning a profit and he or she is likely to mention the following fundamentals:

1. a clear sense of value and purpose
2. a passion for continuous learning, growth and development
3. a healthy, energetic and skilled workforce, the more educated the better since today's economy is largely information-based and buys and sells services more than products
4. a community rich with intellectual, social, cultural, recreational and spiritual resources – one that will attract and sustain a productive, engaged and wealthy population of consumers and employees
5. staying power - resilience to short-term challenges and disappointments
6. ability to anticipate and adapt to change
7. strong support from trusted backers
8. a good fit between the company and the marketplace
9. the good luck to be in the right place at the right time
10. the conviction that your product matters and is worth purchasing

Hey, those elements for success sound real familiar. You would hear the same guidance from parents and professional child advocates. When it comes to raising children to become caring individuals eager and able to contribute to the prosperity of their communities, the rules almost echo sound business practice. What do kids need to acquire if they are to grow and develop successfully? Compare the following list of prerequisites for healthy child development to the one above that builds a foundation for economic security and prosperity. To succeed in life, children need:

1. a clear faith in one's value to family, self and others
2. a passion for learning
3. parents and teachers who cultivate their emerging values, insights and abilities
4. a natural and built environment that offers love, support, stimulation, challenge, play and inspiration
5. resilience – the strength to learn and bounce back from mistakes, challenges and disappointments
6. adaptability to changes in circumstances, expectations and relationships
7. consistent trust in and support from family and friends
8. a sense of comfort and belonging with their environment
9. the good fortune to experience more positive support than negative stress
10. the belief that they do and can make a difference to someone and to the world

So, it seems clear that the same qualities that promote the health, well-being and growth of children also advance the health, well-being and growth of our economy. The emotional security of children lays a base for inspiring all the forms of human energy needed to create the financial security of families, institutions and nations. Since children become the captains (and recruits) of industry and the consumer engines of the economy, their healthy development defines the potential for prosperity. Indeed, the status of children serves as the best barometer and earliest analog of the health and wealth of their communities. Human beings and human enterprise need the same fertilizers. Logically, then, we would strengthen our personal bank accounts and our local economy if, every time we face a business

decision, launch a community project or cast a vote, we asked ourselves: “How will this action affect children?” When the health, well-being and development of children become our first concern, we will also insure our personal and national security. Here’s to the rich life!