COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN – AN INITIATIVE OF SIERRA HEALTH FOUNDATION

A child’s smile can light up the sky with...

WE DID IT OURSELVES

A GUIDE BOOK TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Written by:
Center for Collaborative Planning

Supported by:

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN – AN INITIATIVE OF SIERRA HEALTH FOUNDATION

We did it ourselves
Oh to be a child again...to feel the joy of the many triumphs and to experience the trials of becoming.
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Sierra Health Foundation
An Endowment for Northern California

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Sierra Health Foundation is a private, independent foundation headquartered in Sacramento, California, that supports health and health-related activities in a 26 county region of northern California.

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This Guide Book is dedicated to the men, women, children, and youth who have dedicated themselves, and the work in their communities, to the principles and goals of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative.

**Principles**

- Parents and families, supported by community resources, are first and foremost responsible for the healthy development and care of their children.

- When appropriate, emphasis should be given to prevention of and early intervention for preventable conditions.

- The physical and mental health of a child is affected by a wide variety of factors, family quality of life being the most significant. Other factors which can also influence child health include the environment, heredity, medical condition and treatment, culture, and geography.

- Effective solutions to the needs of children and their families require collaboration among decision-makers, providers, advocates and consumers that represent the diverse interests of the community.

**Goals**

- To improve the health and well-being of children and their families in the Sierra Health Foundation region.

- To assist the communities in the region to identify needs of children and families and pursue new opportunities to address these needs.

- To develop and strengthen the organizations and systems that respond to the needs of young children and families.

- To develop solutions to the needs of children and families by maximizing the use of existing financial resources and services through increased efficiencies, and/or the reallocation of some resources; and where necessary, by developing new resources.

- To achieve a lasting, positive impact on the ability of communities to respond to and organize around children’s needs.
Sierra Health Foundation Community Partnerships for Healthy Children

BUTTE COUNTY
Community Health Alliance of Oroville

CALAVERAS COUNTY
Calaveras Partnerships for Healthy Children

EL DORADO COUNTY
El Dorado County Children and Families Network

MODOC COUNTY
Modoc Collaborative – Families Matter

NEVADA COUNTY
Children’s Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee Community Network for Children & Families

PLUMAS COUNTY
Plumas Children’s Network

SACRAMENTO COUNTY
Cordova Community Collaborative for Healthy Children and Families
Children First – Flats Network
Hagginwood Community Collaborative
North Highlands Children’s Coalition
Tahoe/Colonial Collaborative

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
San Joaquin County Healthy Children’s Collaborative

SHASTA COUNTY
Anderson Partnership for Healthy Children
Grassroots for Kids

STANISLAUS COUNTY
Ceres Partnership for Healthy Children
Modesto Airport Neighbors United
Oak Valley Family Support Network
West Modesto/King-Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative
Westside Community Alliance

SUTTER COUNTY
United for Healthy Families

TRINITY COUNTY
Trinity – Kids First

TUOLUMNE COUNTY
Tuolumne YES Partnership

YOLO COUNTY
Yolo Collaborative for Healthy Children and Families

YUBA COUNTY
Yuba Community Collaborative for Healthy Children
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase I: Community Development:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating the Collaborative Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase II: Asset Based Community</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III: Implementation:</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning Plans into Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afterword: Success</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Reading</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endnotes</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sierra Health Foundation believes that healthy children are the product of healthy communities—and a healthy community is a place where people have a stake in one another’s lives, and make a commitment to build a future collaboratively.

In December of 1993, we began the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children (CPHC) initiative to promote the health and well-being of children, from birth through age eight, by supporting community-based efforts in many northern California communities. CPHC assists local leadership in mobilizing community members on behalf of children. At its heart is the principle that parents and families, supported by their communities, are first and foremost responsible for the healthy development and care of their children. For this reason, the initiative works to build the capacities of communities and residents to strengthen families to nurture healthy children.

The focus on children was selected because of our interest in prevention and the sense that communities are most likely to mobilize around children’s issues. Under this ten-year, $20 million initiative, community-based collaboratives are working to identify assets and needs, establish child health priorities, and develop and implement action plans. Through a process that involves the matching of community assets to community needs, the collaboratives set their own goals and determine what is necessary to reach these goals.

There are three phases to the initiative. During Phase I, Community Development, we supported communities in their development of a collaborative that would focus on bettering the health of infants and young children. Phase I was devoted specifically to recruiting members, building a collaborative, assessing community strengths, assets and needs, and selecting one or more issues to address.

Throughout Phase II, Planning, communities were supported in the development of community-based strategic action plans. In Phase III, Implementation, collaboratives are carrying out their plans. Throughout all three phases, our support provides funds for the “glue” that keeps such mobilization efforts together.

Thirty communities in northern California have participated in CPHC since its inception seven years ago. As these Guide Books are going to print, 25 of these communities are still engaged in this very difficult community building process.

To support the collaboratives throughout all phases of the initiative, we contracted with two organizations that have provided ongoing technical training and support and evaluation. Center for Collaborative Planning has provided technical assistance and training on community development, strategic planning and implementation; SRI International has conducted the overall evaluation of the CPHC initiative and has provided evaluation training to the local collaboratives.

It is the collective experience of the communities, the foundation staff, and consultants that serves as the basis for these Guide Books. Even though we have three years to go in this ten year effort, we feel this information is valuable and worth sharing now. These books are intended to provide practical “how to” assistance on what we have learned so far. In these Guide Books, you will learn about:

- Building a collaborative;
- Planning collaboratively;
- Evaluating community efforts; and
- Effectively communicating your message.

All of us involved with CPHC hope that you find these Guide Books useful and inspiring. Our journey has been a remarkable and rewarding one, and we know it can be for others.
Center for Collaborative Planning (CCP), a center of the Public Health Institute, wishes to thank Sierra Health Foundation for its enthusiastic and sustained support of community development throughout northern California and, specifically, for its ongoing guidance and support for the development of this Guide Book. Our heartfelt thanks go to: Len McCandliss, President; Dorothy Meehan, Vice-President and Steve Barrow, Program Officer from 1996 through 1999.

CCP has provided technical assistance to Sierra Health Foundation’s Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative since its inception. The explanations, activities and tips provided here are the result of CCP’s ongoing work with the communities that are in the initiative family.

Many special people have been involved with this development over the last seven years, from those who participated in the earliest design teams on strategic thinking to those who are still actively involved in engaging their communities and coaching others to do the same.

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References are made in this Guide Book to companion guides in this set. These include:

- *If We Speak They Will Listen: The Importance of Communication Activities in Collaborative Building and Planning.* This Guide Book gives community members an introduction to the breadth and depth of ways to communicate to members of the collaborative, the community, the public, and the media. The communication Guide Book describes basic communication tools and methods such as brochures, flyers, posters, counter-top displays, newsletters, phone trees, the Internet, public speaking engagements, town hall meetings, and word of mouth.

- *We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guide Book.* This takes you through what you need to know and do to keep track of whether your strategies and activities are working. The evaluation Guide Book helps the layperson understand the evaluation process, identifying outcomes and indicators and selecting techniques for collecting data about both your successes and your missteps, analyzing data once you have it, and applying what you have learned to improve your work.

In addition, many helpful Guide Books have been written about collaboration, facilitation, resource development, and implementing action plans. Some of these are referenced in Suggested Reading at the end of this Guide Book. What this volume adds is a sampling of what has worked in real communities in one particular initiative.
In 1993, Sierra Health Foundation wanted to take a fresh approach to addressing children’s health issues. The Foundation wanted a ground-up approach that would invigorate communities, unleash local resources and lead to sustained solutions. The result is the Foundation’s Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative.

The initiative’s name is highly descriptive, but almost too simple to reflect the power and potential of this approach to grant making. As the name suggests, the Foundation asked communities to form broad partnerships around children’s health and well-being. But the underlying goal was to stimulate a collaborative network in each area to form a vision, assess barriers and resources, plot a strategy and then implement solutions. The strength of the initiative came from multiple facets:

- An open-ended definition of children’s health that allowed each community to determine for itself what would make the biggest difference in the lives of children.
- A structured approach that insisted all parties come to a single table, ignore preconceptions and start from scratch on what was needed and what would work.
- The technical and financial support necessary for success.
- A strategic emphasis on discovering and building the capacity and capabilities of each community to continue to address and resolve local problems.

Seven years later, the outcome can be measured in victories, both large and small, throughout the 25 communities in northern California that formed collaboratives as part of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative. This Guide Book shares the processes and experiences that took place in these communities as an approach that others may follow to build similar effective networks. Its contents are not exhaustive; nor are they the definitive word on community development, community building, collaboration, strategic planning or improving children’s health. They are, however, recommendations based on real experience.

Throughout the Guide Book, there is an emphasis on community engagement. This emphasis derives from the simple, but increasingly well-documented, premise that building relationships builds a sense of community, and strong communities promote health and well-being.
Who Should Use This Guide Book?

This Guide Book should be helpful to any community group or members wanting to work together to improve local health and well-being. This includes individuals in voluntary organizations, as well as staff and leadership in local agencies and institutions.

This Guide Book will also be useful for potential grant makers to help them understand the types of activities and tools necessary to make community development happen. It also demonstrates, through resident stories, some of the surprising returns when investments are made in engaging the community.

How is this Guide Book Organized?

There are three sections:

- Community Development: Building the Collaborative Group
- Asset-Based Community Planning
- Implementation: Turning Plans Into Action

These sections represent the three phases of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative. Of course, engaging a community does not really occur in neat, separate phases. It is an ongoing and sometimes untidy process that may involve overlapping activities and intermingled actions.

Each section has explanations, tip sheets and activities designed to help you succeed in each area. Section II also contains stories from six communities that are designed to illustrate how planning works when it is a collaborative, community-engagement process.

In addition, each section contains several components that have been identified as necessary for success. For example, “Ways to Build a Group” appears in the community development section and “Identifying Resources to Develop Strategies” appears in the planning section. These sections are listed in the Table of Contents.

How Should You Use This Guide Book?

You can use this Guide Book many different ways and at many intervals in your community development process. If you already have a collaborative formed, you may want to begin at the Asset-Based Community Planning section. Or you may want to look in the Community Development section for tips on engaging new members. If you’ve already created a plan, you may want some tips on sustainability or re-engaging community members. These appear in the Implementation section.

Reading the stories is essential. Each one, by itself, tells a fascinating tale of community life. Taken together, they begin to tell a composite story of this initiative and the power of collaborative action in building communities and improving their quality of life.
WE DID IT OURSELVES

Children First-Flats Network
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Creating the Collaborative Group

Community Partnerships for Healthy Children is a community development initiative. That means that a key focus – beyond the delivery of services to children – is to build community capacity and capabilities. The belief behind this specific initiative is that involved communities have involved families who have the ability and means to raise healthy children.

While we formally call Phase I “community development,” the work of building or rebuilding healthy communities is ongoing through all phases of the initiative and is expected to continue beyond it.

Why develop collaboratives to accomplish community development?

- Community development or community building depends on identifying, developing and sustaining relationships. Central to being successful in those relationships is community leadership.

- Community collaboratives can provide the leadership to build relationships to promote and improve health.

- In order for a community collaborative to accomplish these goals it must represent the community voice. Therefore, a certain kind of leadership within the collaborative itself is required. We have called that kind of leadership “facilitative leadership.”

What is facilitative leadership?1

“The bad leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people praise. The great leaders is he who the people say, we did it ourselves.”

Lao-tsu

This Guide Book discusses many important ingredients for success. Facilitative leadership (sometimes called collaborative leadership) is one of the most important because without it, the other ingredients, like community engagement, strategic planning and implementation, may not get accomplished.

Facilitative leadership is less directive, less authoritarian, and less regulatory than traditional leadership. Facilitative leaders are relationship builders rather than bosses. They are coaches rather than directors. Their leadership style is collaborative rather than competitive.
What do we mean by collaborative?

In the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative, collaborative means both the group doing the work and the manner in which the work gets done. A community collaborative with committed, facilitative leadership operates to ensure that:

- The group is representative of the community and that no one is excluded.
- When the group gets together, everyone contributes to the discussion.
- Everyone knows how decisions are made and participates in decision making.
- Everyone agrees to a set of common goals and directions.
- Responsibility is jointly shared to reach those goals.
- The talents and capacities of all the members are utilized.
- Leadership itself is shared.

How are we defining a community collaborative?

We are defining a community collaborative as an inclusive, representative group of community members who come together to work toward a common vision. This includes individuals and representatives from organizations. The Community Partnerships for Healthy Children collaboratives, formed to address children’s health and well-being, include representation from:

- Parents
- Churches
- Recreation and sports clubs
- Service clubs
- Arts organizations
- Local business
- Educational institutions
- Local government
- Health and human services agencies
- Law enforcement agencies
- Community-based organizations

How are we defining community?

The Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative defines community geographically but without restriction on geographic unit. Some geographic communities represent entire rural counties, while others consist of an expanse of urban blocks or a “neighborhood.” Collaborative membership and leadership may represent smaller community groups in a geographic area; for example, ethnic or affinity groups. These might include the “Latino community” or “faith community.”
How are we defining collaboration?

Much has been written recently about collaboration and, specifically, about interagency collaboration. Community collaboratives are broader based than interagency bodies. The following points, which apply to both types of groups, are key in our definition of collaboration:

- Collaboration is a process to reach goals that cannot be achieved acting singly or, at a minimum, cannot be reached as efficiently or effectively.
- Collaboration requires a shared vision to guide planning and action.
- Collaboration requires a commitment to share resources (capacity, time, energy, and dollars).
- Collaboration is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Beginning the Process

What follows is a section of activities and tips on how to bring community members together, how to break the ice and how to encourage people to work together in a collaborative manner. During an initial collaborative meeting, some participants may be wondering: “How do I fit in?” or “What is this all about?” If the first meeting is to set the stage for people to work together collaboratively with joint leadership, then simple exercises like the Bean Game or Group Builders and Blockers can help participants understand how to develop mutual respect, build trust, and share leadership. The activities and tip sheets should help you conduct the initial phase of collaborative building, based on the experience of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative.
ACTIVITY: The Bean Game

The bean game is a fun way to set the context of working collaboratively. Try it with a partner first so you can then guide the group.

Instructions:

1. Players pick or are assigned a partner.
2. Each player is given five beans.
3. Use a standard checker or chess board or create one on the computer that you can copy for a group.
4. Players are given the following instructions:
   a. The object of this game is to get as many of your beans to the other side of the board within the time allowed (5-minutes is recommended).
   b. You will win a prize for every bean you get to the other side.
   c. When one person gets their bean to the other side, the game is over and you must start a new game.
   d. You may play as many games as possible within the time frame given.
   e. Players may move their own bean or the other person’s bean.
   f. There can only be one bean on any square at a time, and you may not jump over your partners bean.
   g. You may only make one move per turn, alternating turns.
   h. Players will alternate starting the games.
   i. You must end play when signaled to do so.

Tips:

- Chocolate kisses or other candies are usually well received as prizes.
- Ask participants about their experience playing the game.
- Winners will be those who worked together rather than competed.
- Winners will have many insights into how to communicate to win.
ACTIVITY: Group Builders & Blockers

Instructions:
Below is a partial list of ways to build a group.

1. Go over the list with your group.
2. Add additional things that help to build a strong group.
3. Ask the group to brainstorm on things that might block group success.
4. Ask the group to brainstorm some actions that might overcome these blocks.

Ways to Build A Group:
- Have fun, encourage humor, cherish enthusiasm.
- Develop common goals that are clearly stated and understood by all.
- Develop a clearly defined method to make decisions.
- Encourage consensus.
- Allow for flexible structuring.
- Develop effective process for engaging new members.
- Welcome alternative ideas, stay flexible and open-minded.
- Assign leadership roles on a rotating basis.
- Honor follow through and shared responsibility.
- Deal openly with the effects of power differences on the group process.
- Encourage listening.
- Respect and support each other.
- Build trust.
- Celebrate success.
- Other?

Ways to Block a Group
(Ask group to brainstorm on things that might block group success)

Ways to Overcome Blocks
(Ask group to brainstorm on things you could do to overcome blocks)
A facilitative leader creates an environment where people want to work together.
- Uses effective interpersonal skills.
- Demonstrates unconditional positive regard.
- Embraces diversity and ensures inclusiveness.
- Creates a climate of trust.
- Injects fun and play into group meetings.
- Celebrates accomplishments.

A facilitative leader is available to mentor and nurture the group.
- Coaches group members in defining and fulfilling their roles.
- Supports group members to participate fully and meaningfully.
- Acknowledges and recognizes individual and group participation.

A facilitative leader is concerned with the group’s learning.
- Uses multiple methods.
- Is responsive to the group’s pace.
- Awakens group energy when needed.
- Calms group tension when needed.

A facilitative leader is organized.
- Clarifies group’s goals and objectives.
- Creates a common knowledge base.
- Orienters group members.
- Is on time; starts and ends meetings on time.
- Provides timely information to group members.

A facilitative leader is able to make the group’s process understandable to all its members.
- Effectively summarizes and reports on group work.
- Maintains records of process and accomplishments.

A facilitative leader honors and protects the group’s process.
- Prevents group conflict; deals with group conflict as it arises.
- Assists in choosing and employing effective decision-making processes.
- Identifies and eliminates barriers to goal achievement.
- Reflects on group accomplishments and benchmarks.
**Starting the Meeting**
- Arrange the room to create a comfortable setting, conducive to discussion.
- Make sure all participants and facilitator can hear and see one another, as well as any visual aids.
- Provide a comfortable meeting room: temperature, seating, visual aids, space, etc.
- Provide refreshments whenever possible.
- Start on time.
- Use a brief warm-up or icebreaker to serve to introduce participants.
- Post and review the agenda; ask for additions/changes to agenda.
- Include a clear objective for the meeting on the agenda.
- Post group ground rules, if developed; develop group ground rules, if not developed.

**During the Meeting**
- Support participation from all members.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Encourage the use of examples.
- Applaud creativity and “off the wall” ideas.
- Use “tell me more...” to explore ideas.
- “Listen” for nonverbal cues.
- Maintain focus on the task.
- Help build agreements; stay positive and neutral.
- Make at least one decision.
- Use visuals—flip charts, other aids.
- Use humor whenever possible.
- Acknowledge participation.

**Ending the Meeting**
- End on time unless the group agrees otherwise.
- Review and acknowledge meeting accomplishments.
- Determine next steps: what needs to happen before the next meeting, what is the tentative agenda for the next meeting?

**Periodically**
- Assess effectiveness of meetings at the end of at least one meeting a quarter.
- Rotate the facilitator role.
- Celebrate accomplishments.
Dealing with power differences in an open and honest way is a key ingredient to success in community building. This is not always easy but essential to building relationships.

1. **Orient.** Effective orientation of new members helps to equalize power relationships.

2. **Use ground rules.** Ground rules work best if they are developed by the entire group, acknowledged, hung in a prominent place during meetings and periodically reviewed by the group to see if they are being honored or if there are additions or deletions. (See page 12 for a list of sample ground rules.)

3. **Work to increase numbers of those with less power.** The best way to begin dealing with this is to have open discussions in your collaborative. If you are sincere about wanting to change the power dynamics of your group, you are the best experts on how to do this. For example, if you are looking to increase the number of parents of young children, you may have to change meetings to evening events with potlucks and childcare.

4. **Make special preparations.** For example, schools and community-based programs that successfully involve parents in decision-making make special efforts to inform and orient them. Approaches include special training, meeting in advance with small groups of all or mostly parents, or one-on-one conversations with parent representatives before and after meetings.

5. **Offer special support.** Transportation and childcare stipends are commonly needed supports for parents. Remember, professionals who attend your collaborative meetings have an institution that is covering their time and expenses. Participants experience these differences in support as part of the power relationship.

6. **Listen to and respect all members.** As leader or member, your role modeling can help equalize power relationships in the collaborative.

7. **Be a relationship builder.** Help facilitate and establish personal relationships between leadership in the collaborative and those with less positional power. People need to know their ideas will be heard and respected.
Tip Sheet:

Sample Ground Rules

- Cherish diversity.
- Start and end on time.
- Always have a clear purpose for meetings.
- Make decisions for action at meetings.
- Rotate leadership and membership responsibilities.
- Silence means consent.
- Limit side-bar conversations.
- Encourage members to share ideas.
- We are all experts and we are all learners.
- Decisions are made by consensus.
- Keep a positive attitude – don’t take comments personally.
- One person talks at a time.
- Use a common language.
- Respect everyone’s opinion.
- Everyone should get to share ideas.
- Listen and process what other people are saying.
- All ideas are accepted during brainstorming.
- Keep an open mind.
- Celebrate success.

Cherish Diversity!
Children First-Flats Network
Phase Two

Creating the Strategic Action Plan Using Asset-Based Community Planning

This section contains some of the tools, activities and experiences that were part of the 18-month planning period for the Community Partnership for Healthy Children collaboratives. This section also includes the vision creation process, although by the time the collaboratives embarked on planning most had agreed upon a broad common vision and conducted a community-wide assessment to assess and prioritize local issues. In this phase, the work of planning how to address the identified issues begins.

Who are the Storytellers in this Section?

The stories included here represent collaborative successes. They are a sampling of community building and planning processes that led to the development of strategic action plans to make positive change in lives of children.

Our storytellers are coordinators or members of community collaboratives that were either formed or strengthened as a result of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative. Descriptions of the collaborative communities are also included.

What is “Asset-Based Community Planning?”

Asset-Based

The term “asset-based” comes directly from “Asset-Based Community Development,” which is a way of seeing communities as rich in the talents, abilities and capacities of its people, organizations and institutions. It comes from a firm belief that no matter what problems may exist, it is through finding and using local resources that communities can imagine and implement solutions.

Finding and using local assets to implement solutions is also called community building. By carefully seeking out and utilizing the capacities of local residents, citizen associations and institutions, the Community Partnership for Healthy Children collaboratives also promoted connections between community members and organizations, thus strengthening the fabric of civic life.

Community Planning

The planning process described in this guide is based on strategic planning. This is a process successfully used by organizations and businesses that have learned the value of making the most of what you have to get what you want. This method, however, has typically been conducted by a small group of people in a conference or boardroom.
Transforming this process into community planning means opening it up. It means holding community meetings in churches, schools and parks. Sometimes it means going door to door in urban neighborhoods or travelling hundreds of miles across rural counties.

Collaboratives begin with the hopefulness of a vision, then move to the practicality of a plan. This means working together within the community to reach common ground. Sometimes, different languages present barriers, and cultural practices have to be learned and honored. Often, turf and territory issues have to be addressed. Always, relationships have to be built and trust developed.

Working in a community means that who is involved is just as important as what is done; in fact, what is done depends on who is involved. Equally, what is done will not be successful unless the community owns the plan to do it.

Most important, to be successful in asset-based community planning, a community must define itself inclusively as made up of all its residents who come together to make positive change. The many examples and approaches given in this regard should speak for themselves.

**How Does Asset-Based Community Planning Work?**

Asset-based community planning works by answering a series of questions, which create a logical path from a vision of the future to a plan for action:

- **What do we want in the future?**
  - What is our vision? What results do we want?
  - What are the outcomes we desire?

- **What is keeping us from getting there?**
  - What are our barriers, challenges or issues?

- **What do we have that will help us get there?**
  - What are our assets, resources, strengths or capacities?

- **How can we make the most of what we have to get there?**
  - What are our strategies?

- **Who will do what and by when?**
  - What is our action plan?

- **How will we know if we’ve been successful?**
  - and

- **How can we learn from what we do?**
  - What will our evaluation tell us?
What is the Star Puzzle?

Each piece of the “Star Puzzle” represents one of the questions listed on previous page. Each is a part of the planning process. Look for the highlighted part of the “Star Puzzle” at the introduction to each planning component. Then consult the checklist on page 58 to make sure you have accomplished all the steps in creating your plan.
SHARED COMMUNITY VISIONS FOR CHILDREN’S HEALTH

The following examples illustrate the broad vision statements for children’s health created by collaboratives in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative.

Our collaborative believes that every child deserves to be safe, secure, healthy, nurtured and educated in home, school and community.

GRASSROOTS FOR KIDS
SHINGLETOWN, CALIFORNIA

Live Oak: A Community of Healthy Families

UNITED FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES
LIVE OAK, CALIFORNIA

Our community will encourage our children to grow into responsible, productive and contributing members. Our community is a place where people can express their creativity, care for the natural environment, remain free of abuse and addictive behaviors and show concern for each other.

COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, NEVADA CITY, CALIFORNIA

Our vision is for the children...to play outside in their yards and in the neighborhood parks. They will have...schools that are safe and well attended with students who excel. Our families will have warm and safe housing, enough money to meet their needs, and will be busy going to work or school. Neighbors will be friendly and helpful to each other, and can understand each other’s language and culture. The community will be graffiti-free, with prosperous neighborhood stores, businesses and a joint police and sheriff sub-station open night and day. The community will have a community center as a gathering place for neighborhood activities.

MODESTO AIRPORT NEIGHBORS UNITED
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA
What is our Vision?  
What do we want in the future?

A creative and powerful act
When we ask the question, “What do we want in the future?” we are imagining what we want our community to be. This is a very creative and powerful act because it takes us from what the problems are now to what the solutions could be in the future. Some of the solutions will occur fairly quickly, and some will take years. Nevertheless, we can imagine the community we want in a near distant future, say five years from now, and trust that longer-term solutions will come as we work together to find them.

Needing a focus, not focusing on a need
It may be unfortunate, but it’s probably true that we all know what’s wrong in our communities. The reasons for this range from “all we have to do is look outside” to “there have been numerous needs assessments to tell us.”

In fact, you probably wouldn’t be reading this guide if you weren’t looking for suggestions as to how to change something in your community. This something could be described as a need. In Phase II, we use the need as a focus for our vision, but we move quickly from naming the problem to imagining a solution. This is a focused vision, crafted specifically around an issue, rather than the broader vision the collaborative creates in the beginning. Both can be achieved using similar processes.

There are many ways to come up with a group vision. Several collaboratives in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative created Action Visions, choosing to have community members draw or visually represent what they wanted in the future. Action Visioning is user-friendly and effective, especially when there are language barriers. An activity guide and tip sheet addressing Action Visions follows the first story.
Peggy Tapping and Children First-Flats Network

Peggy Tapping is the coordinator of the Children First-Flats Network in Sacramento. She comes to community building work after a successful career in corporate life. Peggy and her husband own a home in the same neighborhood where she coordinates collaborative activities. She is able to communicate in both Spanish and English.

The boundaries of the Flats Network stretch from 7th to 19th Streets and C to I Streets in downtown/midtown Sacramento. It is the smallest area in the Sierra Health Foundation initiative in terms of square miles but the largest in terms of population density. Encompassing three urban neighborhoods that historically have seen themselves as separate, the population of Flats is diverse in terms of ethnicity, language, age, interests and income.

Peggy recognized her first responsibility to be building relationships. Besides ensuring that information for the neighborhood was available in both Spanish and English, she saw Action Visioning as a way to bring the community together around common themes.

The Dream Begins at a Root Beer Social in Alkali Flats

No matter who you asked about how to improve life for young children, the answer was related to how important it was to get to know your neighbors. Residents saw a direct link between problems like drugs and crime and the lack of a sense of community. So, they decided to actually draw a vision around this theme. They asked, “If we had a real sense of community in our neighborhood, what would it look like?”

Two neighborhood women began with a root beer social in the park next to a local housing development. Mostly moms, grandmothers and young people attended, and the park was alive with children playing and folks chatting in at least two languages. They created their vision, which was “a community with flowers, clean parks, no trash on the streets, children playing freely and safely, clean air to breathe, everyone with a home to go to, where there is love and harmony.”

Later the same month, meetings were held at the Neighborhood Outreach Church and the Washington Community Center. Lots of young people came, and their visions emphasized a clean environment and ways to take care of the homeless. When all of these drawings came together, it was clear that the people of Flats thought the best way to make our neighborhood a safe and healthy place for our children was to build a sense of community.
HERE ARE SOME OF THE IMAGES FROM THE CHILDREN FIRST FLATS NETWORK ACTION VISION:

“Picking Up”

“Clean City”

“Safe Houses”
“VICTORY CELEBRATION IN OUR PLACE IN THE YEAR 2005”

This is an Action Visioning activity developed for the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative; therefore, it emphasizes the health and well-being of young children. The focusing issue, a desire for a sense of community, comes from Children First-Flats Network where the residents of this urban neighborhood decided a sense of community is what it would take for children to be healthy. It is a process that produced a five-year vision.

Why should you try Action Visioning?
- Combines the power of visualization with a fun kind of free-form drawing.
- Creates a victorious picture of the future.
- Provides a chance to create something pretty and colorful instead of all those words.
- Promotes communication in communities where many languages are spoken.
- Provides an opportunity to strengthen relationships among community residents.

What should you expect as a result of doing this activity?
If doing this action visioning results in any of the following, you’ve made important strides in community planning and community building.
- A sense of hopefulness among participants.
- An opportunity to check in with each other and find common ground.
- A chance to begin visualizing some strategies for later action.
- An open discussion about community assets and challenges.
- The beginning of consensus about short and long-term goals.

How long will it take?
30 - 45 minutes

What supplies do I need?
Flipchart pad and easel
Thick markers
Masking tape for each small group
Unlined paper
Pencils, pens, crayons, thin markers
PROCEDURE:

I. Break Up into Small Groups

Break large group into small groups of 8 to 12 people. Assign each small group a facilitator. Ask for another group member to volunteer as a reporter, who will be responsible for later reporting back to the whole large group. Distribute paper, pens, crayons and thick markers.

The facilitator reads aloud the scenario, “Victory Celebration in Our Place in the Year 2005” (next page) and requests that participants record images, ideas and thoughts as they listen. Participants can record key phrases, pictures and symbols as they journey through the victory celebration.

In round-robin style (going around the circle) the facilitator asks each participant to share the following with the other members of the small group:

Favorite image or idea
Most unusual image or idea

Ask volunteers to write or draw their images and ideas on the flipchart paper provided. Allow approximately 10 minutes.

Instruct volunteers to be creative and not to concern themselves with their artistic abilities.

The result of this process will be a small group action vision focusing on “creating a sense of community to improve the lives of children.”

II. Come Back into Large Group

The reporter from each small group will bring his/her group’s action vision to the front of the room, tape it to the wall and highlight images and ideas generated. The reporter from the second small group will tape his/her action vision next to the previous group’s and repeat the process. When all action visions are taped and all group reporters have reported, the result will be a collaborative action vision of a community victorious in creating a sense of community to improve the lives of children.
SCENARIO FOR ACTION VISION ACTIVITY: Victory Celebration in Our Place in the Year 2005

Read the following to begin the Action Vision activity:

Imagine yourself in the year 2005 in Our Place, an ideal community where people, associations and organizations have worked together to create a sense of community. After much hard work, collective thinking and dedication, community members have succeeded in overcoming challenges to meet their goals and are coming together for a much deserved victory celebration. What do you see around you? What are they saying to you and to each other?

Walk around the community and make note of what you see. What do you hear? Follow one of the children in the neighborhood school. Who and what do you see? What sounds do you hear? Follow one of the children to the neighborhood park. What do you see, hear and smell? What are the children touching? Playing on?

What kinds of structures or buildings are there? Who do you notice in these structures? What are they doing? Walk into a business. What do you see, hear and smell?

You pass by a reporter who is interviewing a parent about the new sense of community and the impact that this has on families and children. What do you hear the parent saying? How is she describing the success and the difference it will make for children? Who does she say has been involved in creating this victory?

As you take your leave of the Our Place celebration, think back on all you’ve seen, heard, touched. Think about the many different people and cultures that have come to celebrate. How are they part of the celebration?

Draw or write some of the most striking images you saw, heard, smelled or touched. Capture some of the surprising things and activities. If you had to report back on the three most memorable images about this celebration in Our Place, what might those be?
An outcome is a desired result. Identifying specific outcomes will let you know how well you are doing on your way to reaching your vision. One very simple way to identify outcomes is to look at the individual components of your Action Vision.

For example, in the Action Vision from Children First-Flats Network (page 20), the following components could be translated to desired outcomes:

- **Vision Component:** A community with flowers, clean parks, no trash on the streets.
- **Outcome:** The community will be clean and well cared for.

- **Vision Component:** Children playing freely and safely.
- **Outcome:** Children will have a safe place to play; or Children will be safe.

- **Vision Component:** A community where there is love and harmony.
- **Outcome:** Residents will trust and respect their neighbors.

The purpose of identifying outcomes is to focus specifically on what you are trying to achieve so you can:

1. Focus on and accomplish your goals.
2. Demonstrate success.
3. Learn from what you’ve done.

In order to demonstrate success, you will also determine indicators that will guide you in your learning. These indicators are ways you can measure your success. Some of these indicators will span a long period of time. Some will be measurable in a shorter term.

For example, if we look at the outcome, “children will have a safe place to play,” in order to measure success in that area, we could count the number of children playing in the park from one year to the next. We could also ask parents annually if they were willing to let their children play in the park. In the short-term, we could take a snapshot of the park dimly-lit and littered, as it presently might be, and take a picture a year later to see if it is clean and well-lighted. These are all indicators of success.
What is blocking us from reaching our vision?
What are the barriers that are preventing us from being successful?

After we establish outcomes for the future and before we develop strategies to get there, it makes sense to gain some understanding of what is standing in our way. So we ask, what in our current situation is stopping us from reaching our goals?

The purpose of this activity is to become informed about these problems. A technical term for this is issue analysis. Sometimes, it is called “identifying underlying causes.”

Another way to ask this question might be “What is important for me to know before I can figure out how to achieve success?” Think about playing a board game or a card game. Before you make a move you consider what’s going on with your opponent. You examine the “current reality” of where your opponent’s pieces are on a checkers or chessboard, or what’s been discarded in a game of gin rummy. You need to know this information in order to develop your own strategies to win the game.

In community planning, understanding your “current reality” is also about building relationships, as you engage residents in conversations about the community. The more people that are involved, the more successful the effort will be.

Give special attention to involving those folks who aren’t usually involved. Very often, they are the folks who are considered part of the problem. When they are involved, they are part of the solution. Real change requires broad participation.
Cleopatia Moore and West Modesto’s
King Kennedy Collaborative

In her role as Associate Director of the Stanislaus County Health Services Agency, Cleophathia Moore (Cle) has been with the King Kennedy Collaborative from its inception. Cle has always had a personal commitment to celebrating the diversity of her community and in building on that diversity as a strength. The work of the collaborative provided a perfect public forum for this passionate private vision.

West Modesto itself is a 1.2 square mile area in the City of Modesto, the county seat of Stanislaus County. Part of California’s 300-mile-long Central Valley stretching down the middle of the state, Stanislaus County is home to orchards, vineyards, farms and grain fields. West Modesto is a very diverse neighborhood with its population of 8300 residents speaking five different languages.

West Modesto went through an exhaustive process to reach common ground on what they wanted to achieve and what was stopping them from achieving it.

Understanding the Issues in West Modesto

To say we are a diverse community is an understatement. We speak more than five different languages: English, Spanish and several Asian dialects including Hmong and Cambodian. Of course, even within groups of people who speak the same language, there are diverse opinions. We had to look at what we had in common. When we envisioned a community safe for our children, we discovered we all wanted a community that was free of gang violence.

Then we started to look at what was blocking us from getting there. It didn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out that if we couldn’t talk to one another, we wouldn’t have much chance of solving the problem. So, to get from where we were to where we wanted to be meant doing a lot of community building.

We decided to recruit one person from each ethnic group to be part of our collaborative and help us in our work, and we had to build trust for that to happen. For example, I had to ask permission from Hmong community leaders for a woman in their community to become a representative in our group. Would they give their blessing for her to come work with us, and would they notify the rest of the community that it was okay for a woman to do this work?
Using Cardstorming

At their many meetings, West Modesto/King Kennedy Collaborative used a version of “cardstorming” to come to consensus on some of the underlying causes of gang violence. They agreed on five:

- Many young people had low self-esteem.
- Many young people weren’t actively engaged, either in youth activities or community projects.
- Many young people were experiencing academic difficulties.
- Cultural insensitivity existed in the community.
- Communication between school and family was often ineffective.

Resources were then identified and strategies developed to overcome these blocks to success. Members of the West Modesto/King Kennedy collaborative think the answers they got by asking a broad range of residents were more meaningful than if they had just asked school officials or law enforcement.

Also, when it came time to get commitments to implement strategies, this community was already mobilized for action.

On the following pages are activities for understanding the issues in your community. When we talk about issues, we’re talking about what may be blocking us from success. We can also call these blocks underlying causes, root causes, barriers or challenges.
ACTIVITY:
“Cardstorming”
To Find Underlying Causes

The “cardstorming” process has been used extensively by communities to think and make decisions together. Sometimes it’s called “clustering.” Sometimes it’s called “snowballing.” The Institute for Cultural Affairs calls this technique the “workshop method” and incorporates it into a strategic planning process they have used throughout the world.

Why Should You Try Cardstorming?
- Creates a powerful visual representation of group thinking.
- Encourages individual thought.
- Moves toward group consensus.
- Is colorful, fun, user-friendly for most learning styles.

What Should You Expect as a Result of Doing This Activity?
If doing this cardstorming activity results in any of the following, you’ve made important strides in community planning and community building.
- A deeper understanding of issues affecting the community.
- An opportunity to check in with each other and find common ground.
- An open discussion about community assets and challenges.

You will need:
Approximately 60 sheets of colored paper (5-1/2 x 8-1/2)
A box or two of colored markers
A “sticky wall” of either heavy paper, butcher paper or nylon netting sprayed with remount spray
Masking tape (if no sticky wall is available, use tape loops to stick 1/2 sheets to wall. (You can also use post-its if they work better in your space)
Scratch paper and pens, if needed by participants

How Much Time Will it Take?
Allow about an hour for entire process.
Procedure
1. Ask Focusing Question

Example:
If we want a community free of gang violence, what is stopping us from getting there?

2. Ask participants to write all their responses, what they see in the victory celebration, on a piece of scratch paper.

3. Participants share in pairs or small groups what they have written. Participants decide on most significant ideas between them.

4. Participants write ideas on colored 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 sheets with markers. Instruct them as follows:

   WRITE BIG
   ONE IDEA PER CARD
   3-5 WORDS PER CARD

5. Facilitator calls for ideas in about 3-4 rounds. Ideas go up randomly.

6. Participants pair, then cluster, ideas that represent similar pieces of the vision. Ideas can be clustered under value-less symbols like boxes or circles.

7. Facilitator asks for additional ideas not included.

8. Participants name the clusters.

See illustration of cardstorming on next page.
Tips:
You want to end up with 30-40 ideas so whether you work in pairs or groups will be determined by how many people are participating. Then determine how many ideas per group or pair will be necessary. For example, if you have 30 people at a meeting, divide the group into five groups of six and ask for five or six “best” ideas. If you have 10 people at your first meeting, work in pairs and come up with six or seven “best ideas” from each pair.

You can call for “most outrageous idea” or “most obvious idea” or whatever you think will stimulate group thinking. When an idea is not generally understood, call for clarity from the author.

The drawing below illustrates the cardstorming method by which barriers to successfully addressing gang violence are identified:
In addition to activities such as cardstorming at community meetings, understanding barriers to success can be done through “community research” and “outside research.”

*How Do I Conduct “Community Research?”*

Ask the following questions:

*Has the community tried to solve these problems before?*
*Are there strategies that have worked?*
*Who are the individuals or groups already addressing these issues?*
*What are the assets or resources available in the community to address this issue?*

*How Do I Ask These Questions?*

Community members can conduct interviews and facilitate focus groups.

*Focus Groups*

Identify focus groups with an eye to broad community participation, but also be sure to include groups that have a direct interest in your concerns and will be affected by any solutions you attempt. For example, because the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative is concerned with the health and well-being of young children, focus groups in many communities included PTA members, preschool parents, parents in the recovery community and parents transitioning from welfare to the workforce.

Focus groups are conducted with groups of people who have common interests. Here are some other examples:

*Groups at domestic violence shelters*
*WIC (Women, Infants and Children food program) participants*
*Voluntary associations; service clubs*
*Youth or Senior groups*
*Church groups*
*Business Associations*
**Key Person Interviews**

These one-on-one interviews are often conducted with community leaders or “experts.” Here are some examples:

- AGENCY DIRECTORS
- SHERIFF
- TEACHERS
- COUNSELORS
- SCHOOL
- JUDGES
- NURSES
- DOCTORS
- SUPERINTENDENTS

**How Do I Conduct “Outside” Research?**

Ask the following questions:

- **Who are the experts on this issue?**
- **Where can I find their opinions?**
- **Should I look on the Internet? In the library?**
- **Who are the experts in my community?**
- **Are there studies available in my community?**
- **Do they identify underlying causes for the issue?**
- **Are there other community groups who’ve been successful?**
- **Do they suggest possible solutions?**
- **Do they caution about difficulties in addressing the issue?**

**How Can We Engage the Community in this Research?**

- Divide up the researching tasks.
- Do a round robin or study circle to read and discuss issues.
- Form action teams to do expert and/or community research.
What Are Our Assets, Resources, Strengths and Capacities? What Do We Have that Will Help Us Get There?

Resources: The Heart of the Matter

In order to make positive, lasting change in a community, it is not enough to have a dream. It is also not enough to know what prevents us from reaching our dream. What is most important to know is what we have to make our dreams come true.

Most of what we need to build our dream communities is right under our noses, and a major part of making dreams come true is identifying those assets. We can call these assets a community’s building blocks.

In recent years, communities have identified resources primarily as the services provided by institutions, as in a resource directory. In asset-based community work, we look not only to the assets of institutions, but especially to the capacities, gifts and talents of residents, both individually, and collectively in their voluntary associations.

Often, too, when groups plan for the future, they develop strategies and then see what resources they have to put those strategies into action, but identifying community assets can come first. In fact, identifying assets is the centerpiece of community planning because:

- You don’t know what you need until you know what you have.
- Effective strategies (strategies that will be successful) can be developed based on resources that are available.
- These strategies usually can be implemented first. They will produce some valuable short term successes. Nothing succeeds like success!

The Assets of Individuals

Everyone has a special talent or gift. Therefore everyone can contribute to building a healthy community. Some of us are aware of our capacities and contributions. Some of us have gifts that are still hidden. They remain untapped. A line taken from a W. B. Yeats poem says, “There are no strangers here; only friends we haven’t met.” John McKnight, co-director of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute, expands on this idea and says, “A stranger is someone in a community whose gifts have not yet been identified.”
Shirley Dickard and the Yuba Community Collaborative for Healthy Children

Shirley Dickard is the coordinator of the Yuba Community Collaborative for Healthy Children in Camptonville. For 20 years she was the nurse at Camptonville Elementary, a kindergarten through eighth grade school with approximately 70 students. Camptonville is a tiny historical California Gold Rush community with a population of about 650. Shirley and her husband reside in a house on a hill and often invite collaborative members to meetings in their lovely garden. Shirley has an inspiring story about how identifying and mobilizing the gifts of Camptonville residents have transformed the town.

Twilight School in Camptonville: No More Strangers

We had problems like other communities – unemployment, child abuse and substance abuse for instance – but we felt we couldn’t get people to rally around these. Also, when we looked at factors contributing to abuse and violence, we felt that children and adults needed to have more interaction.

Our solution has been Twilight School, which is a success because it’s built on the special talents and capacities of Camptonville residents. We ask community members what they are interested in sharing, in teaching at Twilight School. We ask people to contribute the gifts they have rather than trying to fit their gifts into a plan of ours. That way, we get lots of community members, not just the “usual volunteers.”

Every other month on Tuesday night, we meet at 6:00 p.m. at the school. We begin by introducing and highlighting everyone who’s teaching. They’re talented community members whose gifts are recognized and respected the same as those of any community college teacher. People also donate refreshments.

One woman, making the transition from welfare to work, for the most part living an isolated rural lifestyle, began working part-time in the school kitchen. She was shy and uncomfortable about people she didn’t know. At first, we literally talked through a crack in her door.

She heard about Twilight School and volunteered to make loaves of whole-wheat bread. Her bread won applause. When we started talking some more, I found out her parents were deaf and that she knew sign language. Soon, she was teaching signing at Twilight School. Then she wrote the winning poem in a local poetry contest. Now she’s coordinating the young children’s activities at Twilight School. We all wonder which of her amazing gifts will be revealed to us next.
We never know where our teachers will come from or what expertise will pop up among our residents. A woman had a craft shop in another town. I asked, is there anything from your background you could teach at Twilight School? She was surprised to be asked and ended up teaching how to make beaded bags and bracelets. Then there was the father with the leather business in his home. He taught leather tooling.

Twilight School has done more to create a sense of community than anything we’ve ever done. It has become a watering hole where everyone comes together on an equal basis, like an old mining town meeting, which binds the community together. The social economic strata that exist are diminished at Twilight School because relationships are built on mutual respect. Say you’ve shared a craft class with someone in a casual encounter. You see that person’s child later and because of the relationship started, you feel more comfortable caring for, watching out for that child.
Capacity inventories are the primary tools for mapping the assets of individuals in a community. Some of the communities in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative developed them from scratch. Some improved on inventories they were already using in volunteer resource networks.

Capacity inventories are community-building tools. Here are some important points to remember about using them:

1. Try to conduct interviews in person as much as possible. Use them to get to know your neighbors.

2. Have a clear purpose in mind. Know how you are going to use the information you collect.

3. Beware of the database syndrome. Sometimes people gather a lot of information, then put it in a database never to be used again.

4. Use the information to connect individuals to community associations and activities where they can contribute their gifts.

Please see Camptonville’s Capacity Inventory in the Appendix.
Here is an example of an activity that can be done at community meetings to begin to map individual assets in a casual way and to get people thinking about the idea of everyone being gifted.

**Materials needed:**
A supply of 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 sheets - (1/2 sheets) of colored paper  
Colored markers  
Masking tape

1. Tell the group:  
   - Work in pairs.  
   - Tell your partner your name and one gift you bring to our “coming together” today.  
   - Write down your partner’s name and gift in large print on 1/2 sheet paper  
   - Tape the 1/2 sheet to the designated area on the wall.

2. Back in large group:  
   - Partners introduce one another by name and gift.

3. Reflect on how it feels to be positive about ourselves and our neighbors.

4. Reflect on contents of the wall. Consider this definition of a stranger: A person in a community whose gifts have not yet been identified. We are not strangers in here anymore. We know each other’s gifts. We can move forward together.
THE ASSETS OF ASSOCIATIONS

Voluntary associations\textsuperscript{11} are being rediscovered as powerful community assets. Associations are groups where members do the work, even though there may be one or two paid staff people. From the local branches of service organizations like the Rotary Club to Parent Groups at schools to self-help groups, to very informal, loosely structured groups like the “Saturday Morning Mom’s Café Au Lait Meeting,” local associations are waiting to be asked to contribute.

These groups are usually small in scale, whether formal or informal, and are places where the gifts of individual community members are already activated for the good of the community.

Other examples of local associations are:

- cultural groups
- social groups
- church groups
- youth groups
- senior groups
- neighborhood improvement groups

Often communities that have seen themselves as lacking resources and therefore deficient have been amazed at how rich they are once they have started to identity their local associations.
Sally Aldinger and Trinity County Kids First Collaborative

Sally Aldinger is the coordinator of the Kids First Collaborative in Trinity County. Sally has lived in Trinity County for 22 years, has been a school board member, as well as a teacher, and has been instrumental in bringing the schools and community together in this rural county where people are often isolated from their neighbors. Trinity County is a sparsely populated (about four people per square mile) area located in the mountains of northern California’s Klamath range. Trinity is known for its wilderness areas and, like so many other rural California communities, has suffered hardships due to loss of jobs in industries like timber and mining. Nevertheless, as is the case in all communities, it is rich in the gifts and capacities of its citizens. A natural place to seek out these gifts is in local associations where the talents of residents are already known and being used.

Sally’s story is wonderfully illustrative of how local associations add to the richness of a community’s resources and can be mobilized to improve life for children and families.

Trinity County’s Kids Come First to Local Associations

When I was first asked to do “asset mapping,” I did it all wrong. I made a four-page list of services provided by agencies in the county. I was gently reminded that this was not community asset mapping.

Then I attended a training on asset-based community development. John McKnight spoke about the power of local associations. He asked us to list all the associations we could think of in our community, and I just started “going to town” on my community of Hayfork. I had over 100 associations. I was feeling all this pride — how individuals had come together. It was the first time I ever realized how wonderful my community was.

In Trinity, we created association wheels for each of twelve communities countywide. We blew these wheels up to poster size and took them to the county fair. Then we stopped people to help fill in the wheel for their community.

Of course, we not only mapped or identified associations. Once we knew who they were, we asked them to contribute. In this way, we mobilized them to help our kids.
One of our collaborative members is a Grange Member. She and her husband went to the Grange Hall in Junction City with the association-mapping wheel. By the end of the meeting, she had the Grange members’ commitment to open up the Grange Hall for ping-pong for kids.

The Mule Committee stages mule races at the county fair, and during the rest of the year they hold barbecues for fundraising and special events. Now, thanks to a great idea by two of its members, they hold the annual Etiquette Dinner for our kids. The committee does all the planning and preparation. The kids make reservations and invite a special adult. Everyone wears their very best clothes and donates their best dishes. The whole community scurries around. Over 100 people attended our Second Annual Etiquette Dinner!

The Peanut Women’s Club was originally formed when there was a mill and a mill camp. They used to run the Bingo games, but there are still members of the Club you can call if there’s anything you need for a child. We needed a marquee in front of a school. The club members got their husbands to go cut logs for the marquee.

The Lions Club runs Fishing Friends. We had 61 kids involved in this activity which makes use of our natural resources. This year, the Lions Club will use community donations to carry on this activity. Fishing seemed like a natural way for adults and children to come together in our area.
Group Activity to Map and Understand the Power of Local Associations

1. Have participants write down all the associations they belong to. These can be formal or informal associations. Some examples are:
   - cultural groups
   - social groups
   - church groups
   - youth groups
   - senior groups
   - neighborhood improvement groups
   - self-help groups
   - sports groups
   - women’s and men’s groups

2. Ask participants for an example of two associations they wrote down. Ask participants how many they wrote down in total.

3. On a flip chart in front of the group, record associations on one side and record number of members on other.

4. Add total number of associations in room.

5. Discuss how powerful and under-utilized this tool is in community work.
Suggested Steps to Enlisting Local Association Support:

1. Ask group members to make a list of associations they belong to or participate in. (See activity, page 41).

2. Ask each member to put his or her name on the list.

3. Ask each member to agree to make a presentation at one of the associations he/she belongs to and to do the same inventory of associations with those members.

4. Do presentations and association listings for 10 more groups.

5. Don’t put the list in the computer. Keep it out and work with it as possible relationships to be built in support for your efforts.

6. This list can be “clustered” into like associations; for example, youth groups, church groups, arts and culture groups, self-help groups, sports groups, women’s and men’s groups. Then a “cluster” of associations can be asked to help with a particular strategy.

Tips for Enlisting Support of Local Associations:

1. Encourage members to come up with names of informal, as well as formal associations. A bowling team that meets regularly might be willing to come together for community well-being. Be expansive rather than limited in thinking.

2. Remember that this work is all about building relationships and trust.

3. Give recognition to associations that contribute or participate in any way. This recognition will spur interest among other associations and will strengthen existing relationships.

4. Approach others with an attitude that they want to contribute and you’re giving them the opportunity.
THE ASSETS OF INSTITUTIONS

A community’s institutions are often looked upon to solve problems and promote health and well-being. In asset-based community work, we look beyond the mandated roles of the institutions, that is, the services institutions and agencies are expected to provide, to the “treasure chest” of resources most community institutions can contribute to community building.

For example, in many of the communities in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative, schools have moved beyond their mandated role of teaching students to contribute facilities, staff, supplies and equipment to community planning efforts.

Of course, schools and other institutions are often eligible for grants that can be used for community building purposes as well as delivery of services.

Here is a partial list of community institutions:

- Government
- Law Enforcement
- Schools
- Hospitals, health departments
- Social service agencies
- Libraries
- Non-Profits
- Private business

Just by reviewing this list you can begin to imagine the types of resources these institutions could provide. See page 46 for ways you can begin to map these assets.
Mike Costa and the Tuolumne County YES! Partnership

Mike Costa, Assistant Sheriff of Tuolumne County, has been involved with the Tuolumne YES Partnership, a county-wide collaborative, since the beginning of the planning process. Tuolumne County, in the foothills of the Central Sierra mountain range is home to Gold Rush history as well as Yosemite National Park. Like many counties in California, a slow economy and an increase in illegal drug production are challenges families with young children face. This is Mike’s story about how Tuolumne County’s institutions have supported planning and community building.

Tuolumne County’s Local Institutions:
Community Forums afford Partnership Opportunities

Since we began a community planning process, community forums have become an annual event in Tuolumne County. Our first forum was in September 1994. It was there that we talked about our issues, about the things we wanted to change, and determined what we thought was most important to address.

Right from the beginning, we had the support of local government. The Board of Supervisors named the YES Partnership the official planning body for children’s health and well-being. Then, when we thought transportation would be an issue for parents to be able to attend the forum, the Board of Supervisors supported a bus from the local transportation authority to pick up parents from their residences. We also asked local businesses to allow parents to take some time off from work on the morning of the forum. Many businesses showed their support by doing just that.

But my favorite forum was held the next September in 1995 at the Opera Hall in downtown Sonora. The City of Sonora donated the hall for the night. A local photographer had taken pictures of kids at one of our childcare centers. We used them on our brochure, and copies of them were blown up and placed all around the room. The local high school district donated space for childcare up the hill from the Opera Hall, and we used the Sheriff Department’s walkie-talkies to communicate with the childcare providers.

A parent who was becoming involved with the Partnership talked to us about her son and the dreams she had for him. It was a stirring presentation that the local paper published, along with a story about the forum.
Earlier, our collaborative had divided up into research and action teams, and I had been on the child abuse prevention team along with a representative from Child Welfare Services and a grandmother recovering from alcoholism. We had spent many months in research and presented our findings to the community at that forum. That night we brainstormed strategies and asked people to make commitments.

Our forums have continued every year for the last five years. All of the agencies involved in the Partnership were sponsors and contributors to the original forum, and they have continued to support the event. Besides volunteer hours, they contribute resources in the form of personnel, duplicating, graphic design, equipment, refreshments, mailing and publicity. Our community forums have helped to forge stronger partnerships between agencies like schools, law enforcement and local non-profits. They have also provided a vehicle for these institutions to support community building. Forums offer a place for community residents to come together to problem-solve and make positive change.
**ACTIVITY:**

*Discovering Hidden Treasure*

**Group Activity to Map the Assets of Local Institutions**

_Tell the Group_

When we think of the assets of community institutions, often we think only of what the institution is mandated to do. But there are many more assets that institutions have to offer the community.

For example, a school teaches students. This is definitely an asset to the community, but schools also have the following to contribute: facilities, personnel and expertise, jobs, equipment and buying power.

All of these, when identified and mobilized, can enhance community building efforts.

1. Have group members (for example, at a collaborative meeting) individually write down all the assets of the institution they work for that could be used to support community-building efforts. Instruct them to be creative.

2. Use the following Treasure Hunt questions to prompt the group:
   a) What resources does your institution contribute to neighborhood or community efforts?
      - *E.g. facilities, expertise, and equipment*
   
   b) How does your institution contribute to the economic health of your neighborhood or community?
      - *Who do you hire in the neighborhood or local community?*
      - *Who do you do business with in the neighborhood or local community?*

   c) How does your institution contribute to the associational life of your neighborhood or community?
      - *What neighborhood groups do you belong to or meet with in your institutional role?*
      - *Are neighborhood people on your board of directors, advisory groups or committees?*

3. In large group, record all institutional assets so they can later be used to support community efforts.
What are our strategies?
How can we make the most of what we have to get what we want?

By this point, you have gathered a good deal of information about your community:

- You have agreed on a vision for the future as it relates to a particular problem or issue you want to address.
- You have identified some barriers to success.
- You have asked questions about addressing these barriers, both in your community and beyond it. The answers to these questions are the beginning of strategy development.
- You have identified community resources: assets of individuals, associations and institutions.

In asset-based community planning, an effective way to further develop and prioritize strategies (and make the most of what you have) is to combine the resources you have identified in activities that address the barriers to success.
COMMUNITY STORY

Jason Tescher and the Hagginwood Community Collaborative

Jason Tescher, the coordinator of the Hagginwood Community Collaborative, came to his position with previous experience as a community organizer, as well as strong ties to the music community in Sacramento through his skills as a trombonist. Hagginwood is an older city neighborhood in north Sacramento. In contrast to the age of the neighborhood’s infrastructure, 24% of its residents are nine years old or younger. Because of this, the Collaborative has taken on the boundaries of its local elementary school as its area of development. The Hagginwood Community Collaborative created a “block parties” strategy to achieve their desired outcome of children being safe. They had identified “unsupervised children” as one of the barriers to reaching this outcome. This strategy combines many of Hagginwood’s identified resources to achieve their goals.

Block Parties Mobilize Community in Hagginwood

We had done a community survey at a barbecue to determine what people wanted to work on. Folks were concerned with children being safe. Some reported blocks to achieving this were substance abuse, unreported and drug-related crime and unsupervised children.

At the Fall Festival Fair at Hagginwood Elementary, there were children’s activities, clowns, food and information for parents. When we gave out meal tickets for the food, we invited parents to take part in focus groups. We talked to almost 100 parents at the Festival. In these focus groups, we not only got agreement from parents about focusing on “unsupervised children,” but we also brainstormed strategies to address this issue.

We knew a community working and playing together would be one way of keeping our children safe. Some of our outside research had led us to the Savannah Project where small neighborhoods were making big changes with a minimal amount of outside dollars.

A parent suggested block parties as a way to get to know our neighbors. It was perfect because we were looking for civic involvement rather than volunteerism. We didn’t want to generate volunteers. We wanted to encourage people to become involved in their own community by engaging their talents. We applied for and received a small grant to hold the block parties.
We formed a committee of two parents, one employee of the City Neighborhood Services project, and one 11-year old. Part of the money was used to enroll committee members in youth leadership and community development courses at California State University, Sacramento. The class project was organizing block parties.

The committee then found 20 people who wanted to throw block parties. In the first year, our collaborative purchased $100 worth of supplies, which we gave to block leaders. In the second year, we gave each of the block party captains a $50 gift certificate to a discount store. They purchased supplies themselves.

After three years, we have grown from 4 to 21 block parties, which we hold in August to celebrate “National Night Out.” A team of “Ambassadors” including collaborative members not otherwise involved, city councilmen, county supervisors and school personnel go as a team to block parties to listen to community members. The Police Department sends a set of officers to every single party to form better relationships with community. After each set of block parties, our city councilman presents resolutions, thanking each person for civic involvement.

The whole community is mobilized and that’s what makes it so successful!
**Identify Assets of Individuals**

First consider the assets of “groups” of individuals who might be “labeled” in your community. These are often the groups of individuals who are seen as people who need services rather than people who have assets to contribute to the solution. A community’s youth is often seen this way. So are elders, people with disabilities, families who live in low-income neighborhoods, pregnant teenagers and people with substance abuse problems.

Make a list of all these groups of labeled individuals in your community, e.g. youth, low-income parents, pregnant teens, seniors.

**Map Neighborhood Associations**

See page 41

**Identify the assets of local institutions**

See page 46

Begin to mobilize these resources by linking them to implement strategies: At a community meeting, put identified resources up on a board (Example below taken from Hagginwood’s Block Party Strategy; see page 51).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUALS</th>
<th>ASSOCIATIONS</th>
<th>INSTITUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YOUTH</td>
<td>HAGGINWOOD</td>
<td>CITY OF SACRAMENTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COLLABORATIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARENTS</td>
<td>OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD</td>
<td>HAGGINWOOD ELE</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELDERS</td>
<td>ASSOCIATIONS</td>
<td>SACRAMENTO POLICE</td>
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<td>DEPARTMENT</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Link these assets to develop strategies.

**To review:** Hagginwood’s planning process went like this:

**The Community:**
1. Wanted their children to be safe.
2. Asked what would a community safe for its children look like?
3. Said the children would be supervised.
4. Asked what is stopping us from making that happen.
5. Determined that neighbors needed to be more connected.
6. Looked at their resources.
7. Did research and found out about small projects, like block parties and neighborhood beautification projects in Savannah, Georgia.
8. Asked what resources do we have and what resources do we need?
9. Linked the local resources below to implement block parties.
10. Applied for outside resources: mini-grant to help provide seed money for first-year parties.
The Hagginwood Community mobilized to implement block parties might look like this:

Here are some key areas of involvement:

- Elders and parents became block party captains.
- Young people served on committees, attended college courses and built leadership skills.
- The Hagginwood Collaborative, a neighborhood association, coordinated the effort and applied for the mini-grant.
- The schools sent personnel as Ambassadors to the Block Parties.
- The City of Sacramento sent a city councilman to give an award for civic involvement, and provide a committee member through its Neighborhood Services project.

Things to Remember:

- These same community assets may have been linked in other ways and for other reasons.
- An asset, like youth or schools, can appear in the center circle and strategies can be developed around them.
- The arrows go both ways. For example, while youth are contributing to block parties, they are developing leadership and employment skills. While police are providing services for these events, they are also gaining the trust of the residents.
- Relationships are built across and between all the linkages.
After you have developed strategies that address some of your barriers to success and utilize your community assets, you might want to consider using this tool to ensure a comprehensive approach to community health planning.

This step is not absolutely necessary to make change in your community or for community building, but it is very valuable to know how change gets made that eventually affects a large number of people and has the greatest impact. This kind of impact usually requires some major policy or systems change in a local, statewide or even federal institution.

A well-known example of a comprehensive approach to community health and well-being is Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). This is a grassroots movement that educated the community creating awareness of the problem, building coalitions, changing organizational practices and eventually bringing about legislative change. One mother who lost her child to a drunk driver started MADD.

MADD has changed the way we think about drinking and driving in this country and has been instrumental in creating laws that reflect and project this new way of thinking. A designated driver is now commonplace; so is a bartender calling a taxi for a customer after one too many.Legislatively, legal blood alcohol levels for operating a vehicle have been lowered, resulting in increased arrests and, ultimately, reduced incidence of drunk driving.
**ACTIVITY:**

*Using the Policy Circle to Ensure a Comprehensive Approach to Strategy Development*

Draw a large circle (as seen on the previous page) and divide it into the four areas of possible strategy development: educate community, foster coalitions, change systems and impact policy.

As you develop strategies, place them in the Policy Circle depending upon the way in which they operate within your community.

- **If you have strategies that seem to overlap, or fall into more than one area of the circle, these strategies are likely to have a great deal of impact.**

- **If you have areas of the circle with an overabundance of strategies, and other areas in which you have none or very few strategies, you may have many like-minded folks involved in the planning. When this is the case, you may get only one type of solution. For example, public health nurses do a wonderful job of community health education and promotion, but they might not be thinking of how to change policies or systems to ensure that resources are allocated for these activities. Who are the missing partners?**

- **However, if there are no strategies in one or two areas in the Circle, this may be an issue of readiness. For example, a community that has only begun to work together may not be ready to build constituency to address policy issues.**

By plotting activities in the Policy Circle, a community group can see what types of strategies it is emphasizing and might consider some others.

Members can also see that some strategies are very powerful because they actually involve all the areas of the policy circle.
Because you have worked hard to engage so much of your community and thought broadly about how to achieve success, you have probably come up with many strategies. Before you create a work plan to implement or carry through on your ideas, it is a good idea to do some prioritization.

This can be done by asking a number of questions. These questions serve as a kind of test of your reasoning in selecting the strategies you have.

**Questions for Prioritizing Strategies**

**Plausibility**
- Will the strategy lead to accomplishing your outcome?
- Is it a logical way to accomplish your goals?
- Has it been tried in your community or somewhere else?
- Has it worked?
- Does common sense or logic suggest that it will work?
- Does research or expert opinion support the strategy? How?

**Feasibility**
- Have local resources been identified to accomplish this strategy?
- Can these local resources be effectively mobilized?
- Have additional or outside resources been identified, if needed?
- Is the strategy technically feasible (in terms of skills, equipment, etc.)
- Is it cost-effective?
- Are there strategies that could be accomplished right away?
- Should we do these first to have a short-term success?

**Community Building Criteria**
- Are there ample opportunities for community involvement?
- Are there ample opportunities for youth involvement?
- Are strategies acceptable to community members?
- Has there been coordination with other networks, coalitions or partners?
- Are strategies consistent with mission, values, philosophy and culture of the community?

**Impact**
- Will the strategy have a long-term impact?
- Will it impact many people in the community?
- Will it create significant change? How?
- Do our combined strategies represent all four sections of the Policy Circle?
Action Planning
Who Will Do What and By When?

Creating an action plan is the way to turn your best thinking (as represented by your strategies) into action. It gives you a blueprint for achieving your goals, as well as what you can expect when you do. It also creates accountability and continues the momentum that you no doubt have built up through the process of completing the other steps in the Star Puzzle.
**ACTIVITY:**

*Creating an Action Plan*

**Steps for Creating an Action Plan**

1. Write down one of your strategies.
2. Write down the outcome you are hoping to achieve through this strategy.
3. Identify responsibility for implementing steps.
   - Who will be responsible for coordinating or ensuring that each of the steps is implemented?
4. Identify resources available and resources needed.
   - Go back to the resource mapping you have done.
   - Identify the assets of individuals, associations and institutions that can be used to implement this strategy.
   - Identify the resources you still need. These can be found during implementation.
5. Develop an implementation timeline. When will you complete the Action Steps you listed above? In three months? In two years? Decide and write it down.
6. Write down short-term outcomes. What will be the result of each of the steps you take? When you track these, you can track your achievements as you go. You can also see if what you expected to happen as a result of your taking certain steps, actually does. Also, when you are hoping to achieve far-reaching outcomes like improving children’s health, marking these short-term successes often gives you the energy to keep going.

<table>
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<th>Strategy</th>
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**Long-Term Outcome**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Who will Coordinate It?</th>
<th>Resources Available</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Short-Term Outcome</th>
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How will we know we’ve been successful?
How will we learn from what we do?
How can we do better based on what we’ve learned?

What is an evaluation? An evaluation is the systematic collection, analysis and reporting of information for decision-making.

Why do an evaluation?

- To become a learning community where people try to improve community activities based on information and reflection.
- On the basis of evaluation data, learning communities can decide to stay with what they are doing, to alter it slightly or significantly or to abandon it altogether.
- To collect data to celebrate successes.
- To communicate concrete information about your community to potential grant makers or the media.
- To be responsive to outside funding sources which may require evaluation.
- To be able to share lessons learned with communities facing same or similar challenges.
Has the community done the following?

- Created a vision for the future? Page 21
- Identified specific outcomes from that vision? Page 24
- Researched the issue to understand what’s blocking it from reaching its vision? Page 31
- Identified local assets: individuals, associations, institutions? Page 37, 41, 42, & 46
- Developed strategies using identified assets? Page 50-53
- Prioritized strategies according to plausibility, feasibility and community building criteria? Page 54
- Created an action plan which outlines who does what and by when? Page 56
Children First-Flats Network
IMPLEMENTATION

Turning Plans Into Action: Successfully Implementing the Action Plan

Communities in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative are presently engaged in implementing their strategic action plans. At the time of this writing (Spring 2000), most communities have been implementing their plans for more than two years. Below are some of the factors identified as necessary to successful implementation. An extensive evaluation of the initiative is contained in reports prepared by SRI International. Those appearing below have been less formally gathered in two years of collaborative presentations at conferences and training seminars, and anecdotally in hundreds of phone conversations and site visits. A discussion and some tips and activities follow in this section.

When you look at the list below, you will find that many of these components were presented in the first two sections. This is because, as mentioned earlier, community building is ongoing and does not truly happen in separate phases that begin and end like a chapter in a book. For example, facilitative leadership is needed every bit as much when a group has been working together for a while as when it was forming. Also, even though local resources have been identified during the planning phase, mobilizing those resources is key to successful implementation of your plan.

You can see that all of these activities are about sustaining your efforts in your community.

Continued Coordination of Effort

Ensuring coordination of strategies.
Sharing leadership of the collaborative group.

Continued Mobilization of Resources

Ensuring connections and contributions of associations and institutions.
Ensuring connections and contributions of local residents.

Continued Evaluation of Activities

Evaluating and revising strategies and activities.
Conducting a collaborative self-assessment.
Using evaluation data to tell a community story.
Since this kind of effort requires coordination of several strategies and activities simultaneously, leadership is a key ingredient in success. Facilitative leaders understand the necessity of sharing the leadership role. This is not a one-person job. A successful community coordinator celebrates success by measuring what he or she didn’t personally do on a given day.

Below is a Partnership Credo developed by coordinators of the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative at a leadership retreat. It was developed to help create partnerships across the initiative as a whole. Coordinators then helped their individual collaboratives develop a similar credo. This credo demonstrates how important shared leadership is to success.

**PARTNERSHIP CREDO**

*We, as Partners in Community Partnerships for Healthy Children Initiative, Resolve To:*

- Form a cohesive force that is geographically and culturally diverse to build toward our vision of healthier neighborhoods and communities for our children;
- Have integrity by being honest with ourselves and others;
- Be an action-oriented force;
- Work together to clearly define the roles of the partners and to view and respect each other as equals in the leadership of the Initiative;
- Bring humor and levity to every meeting, and celebrate successes;
- Take sufficient time to get to know each other;
- Acknowledge that conflicts will occur and address them by naming the conflict, discussing the issues and coming to consensus on a resolution;
- Communicate effectively by making our communication honest, clear, open and regular;
- Keep an open mind so that we may learn from each other, about both our successes and our mistakes;
- Openly share our resources, experiences and ideas;
- Trust each other and be trustworthy;
- Be flexible regarding our expectations of each other and changes within the process and activities of the initiative.
One of the ongoing challenges facing community collaboratives is engaging new membership. The following suggestions take time and energy, but if the primary work in community development is relationship building, these suggestions are well worth the effort.

**Icebreakers**

When a new member is present, start each meeting with personal introductions of all members. In addition to asking folks to share their name and affiliation, try questions like these:

- What is one thing your parent(s) or member of your extended family gave you as a child that has contributed to your success as an adult today?
- What is the most important thing a community can do to help parents raise their children to a successful adulthood?
- What are the characteristics of the most successful group/collaborative experience you have had?
- The task I least enjoy or the biggest challenge to me is...
- The reason why I joined this collaborative is...

**New Member Orientation**

Be sure to carefully orient new members either prior to or during their first meeting. Orientation should include:

- Purpose and expected outcomes of the collaborative effort
- Key goals and objectives
- Progress to date
- Roles and responsibilities of those involved in the collaboration
- Ground rules

**Self Interest Interview**

Include the following questions at the end of new member orientation:

- What do you care deeply about in your community?
- What is your vision for the community?
- What special expertise or talents will you contribute to reach your vision?

Encourage new members to share self-interest at first meeting.

- Invite three collaborative members to share their vision and talents.
- Invite new members to share in the same way.

**Securing Commitments**

At the end of the meeting, ask each new member if he/she is ready to commit to the collaborative effort or needs more time to think it over. This is otherwise known as closing the sale. If he/she needs more time, follow-up with a call at an agreed-upon time to secure commitment.
A collaborative or community group that has worked together for a while usually needs to refine and/or redefine roles and responsibilities. Use this activity as an icebreaker at a community meeting when you notice that the agency or “professional” folks are dominating discussion or seeing the issues in terms of their institution only, not in terms of the community at large.

**Instructions:**

1. Create a “placecard” like the one pictured below by folding an 8½ x 11 sheet of paper
(Or use a real hat. Paper fedoras work very well. You can get them at party stores.)

2. Have people write their name and professional affiliation on the professional side of the hat or on a small label that fits on the front of a hat.

3. Ask everyone to introduce themselves just by what they’ve written. Hold them to a brief introduction. It will save time plus the idea is that this description is a bit limiting.

4. On the other side of the card or hat they can write their name and who they are in the community (other than professionally).

5. Throughout the meeting, make a point of asking folks to put on or take off their professional hat at certain times during discussion or decision making.

You know this activity is working when folks do this on their own. Someone will say, “Oh wait a minute, I have to take my professional hat off before I say this.”

---

**Personal Side:**

Joanna Brown  
Mother of Two  
Mentor Mom

**Professional Side:**

Joanna Brown  
Dept. of Health & Human Services
Keep these R’s in mind when you want to keep collaborative members and community residents engaged.

**RECOGNITION**
- Awards
- Dinners
- Highlighting contributions
- Public recognition
- Thank-yous

**RESPECT**
- Meet needs of members, i.e. translation, child care, meeting times
- Acknowledge and celebrate cultural differences

**ROLE**
- Provide opportunities for involvement
- Share power
- Share decision making
- Utilize individual’s unique gifts and talents

**RELATIONSHIP**
- Provide opportunities for getting to know one another
- Provide opportunities for networking among members
- Provide opportunities for networking with other organizations and leaders

**REWARD**
- Regularly assess whether members’ needs are getting met
- Respond to individuals’ self-interests

**RESULTS**
- Create small wins
- Demonstrate progress towards goals
- Celebrate success
- Make results visible in the community
Trust is an essential element in creating a safe environment for successful collaborative work. Checking in on trust levels can be important to keep a group engaged during implementation. This is especially true when you set about the difficult task of sharing resources.

Instructions:

Make a personal list of what creates feelings of trust for you and what destroys that feeling of trust. Draw from both your personal and work experience. Share your list with a partner and/or with the group. The activity comes from Shirley DicKard, coordinator of the Camptonville Collaborative in Yuba County.
CONTINUED MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES
Ensuring connections and contributions of associations and institutions
Ensuring connections and contributions of local residents

As part of strategic planning, you identified local resources by mapping assets of individuals, associations and institutions in your community. During implementation you must ensure these assets are put to use to implement your strategies. You can look at this as making connections and getting contributions or mobilizing a community for action.

Contributions of Local Institutions
Local institutions, like health and human service agencies, schools and law enforcement, can maximize their contributions to community development efforts by operating in certain ways that facilitate success.
Local institutions that support community development work have deep respect for the wisdom of individual citizens and citizens in association. They do not expect citizens to do the work of institutions. They recognize they are fellow citizens with one symbolic vote to use in association with fellow citizens. They walk with the community on its journey rather than making the path or leading the way.

They have useful information for local folks. They share information in understandable forms. They are not the source of analysis or solutions. They provide information that mobilizes the power of local citizen associations to develop and implement solutions.

They use their resources and connections to strengthen the community. They listen for opportunities to enhance local leadership, strengthen local associations and magnify community commitments. They ask how the system’s resources might enhance the problem-solving capacities of local groups.

They work from a community assets map. They are escaping the ideology of a deficit model. They know that communities are built upon the gifts, skills, capacities and associations of people, not their deficiencies.
Local institutions are often engaged in assessing a community’s needs. What if those same institutions helped in administering capacity inventories to those same folks? What changes might occur in communities if the capacities of residents were systematically identified by local institutions and agencies? Can you see how connecting these assets could help implement community strategies?

List institutions in your community that can be enlisted to help you administer your capacity inventory:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Find the Right Door

Contact:
________________________________________________________________________

Phone #:
________________________________________________________________________

How will they help?:
________________________________________________________________________

Next steps:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
During planning you began to map local associations. In implementation, you want to be sure those assets are used.

**Steps:**
1. Use the worksheet below to “map your way in.”
2. Use a local association meeting to inventory the gifts and capacities of its membership.
3. Match those capacities with the resources still needed to carry out your action plan.

**Remember:** Associations are small voluntary groups of folks just waiting to be asked to help. Here are some examples:

- cultural groups
- social groups
- church groups
- youth groups
- senior groups
- neighborhood improvement groups
- service groups
- men’s and women’s groups

**List your local associations:**
[Begin with those that would be most helpful in administering the capacity inventory you have designed, but don’t limit yourself].

---

**Map your way in:**

Contact:


Phone #:


Regular Meeting Date:


How will they help?:


Next steps:
Community coordinators who presently train others in the Community Partnerships for Healthy Children initiative suggested the following tips.

**Points to Remember About Engaging Community Members For Action**

- Continue to use all the processes that make community members feel welcome and that help to facilitate understanding. For example, use lots of visuals and serve lots of food.

- You don’t ever stop mobilizing resources.

- Go to people; don’t just wait for them to come to you.

- Ask people to do something they already want to do.

- Ask face-to-face or on the phone. Have enthusiasm, give lead time, return all calls, take notes, keep records.

- Develop strategies from existing resources.

- Mobilize associations where the gifts of individuals are already mobilized (remember informal associations).

- Share community stories.

- Connect people with people.

- It takes everybody’s gifts. People need to know what contribution they will make.

- People need to feel safe and trusted.

- Celebrate successes (small and large).

- Acknowledge, recognize, thank members.

- You don’t always know what the final product will be - stay flexible.

- Keep the playing field level.
CONTINUED EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES

- Evaluating and revising strategies and activities
- Conducting a collaborative self-assessment
- Writing community stories from evaluation data

One of the indicators of a successful community effort is a commitment to learning. A collaborative or community group that wishes to sustain its efforts will systematically review its progress in terms of its action plan and collaborative functioning.

Evaluating and Revising Strategies

Complete instructions for developing an evaluation plan, writing an evaluation report and making sense of evaluation findings are found in *We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guide Book.*
Instructions:

1. Begin with this list of indicators of a well-functioning collaborative:
   - The group is representative of the community.
   - All are welcome and included.
   - When the group gets together, everyone participates in discussion.
   - Everyone knows how decisions are made and participates in decision making.
   - Everyone agrees to a set of common goals and directions.
   - Responsibility is jointly shared to reach those goals.
   - The talents and capacities of all members are utilized.
   - Leadership is shared.

2. Add to the list as your membership sees fit. Put down what is important to your group.

3. Determine your strengths, challenges and actions by asking for specific evidence that your collaborative is working this way.

4. See guidelines for facilitating and recording the self-assessment process on page 73.
Conducting a Collaborative Self-Assessment
Facilitating and Recording Guidelines

1. Use three flipcharts side by side.
2. Facilitator records Strengths while facilitating discussion.
3. Recorder records Challenges as they come up.
4. When Strengths and Challenges are named, Recorder records the Action and the name of the person willing to take the Lead.

**Rationale:**

The purpose of doing a self-assessment as a facilitated conversation is to come up with specific evidence that demonstrates success or continued challenges.

For example, a question might be, “How do we insure participation among our membership?”

Responses should be in the form of specific evidence such as: “We use cardstorming (see pages 28-30) to ensure participation by all members in planning sessions. This would be evidence. Record it as a Strength.

In this conversation style, the free flow of ideas may result in participants naming difficulties the collaborative is having in this area. An example of this kind of response would be: “You know, we haven’t done enough about translating information at meetings.” We record this as a Challenge.

Because we always want to build on our strengths to overcome our challenges, recording these simultaneously facilitates the next level of discussion, which is Action.

Record an Action and ask for a person who is willing to take the Lead. The collaborative can then devise a plan to address its challenges.
Through evaluation, communities learn much about themselves. How this information is presented will influence how useful it is to community members. Sometimes facts and numbers are the best presentation method. Other times, people can absorb the significance of facts more easily if they are presented in a story.

Here are some guidelines that utilize good writing practices to create community stories from evaluation data.

Use facts or statistics (data) that reveal successes or lessons learned and turn them into stories by developing the elements of character, setting, plot, dialogue and voice:

- Develop character by creating character sketches for all the main people involved. Use composite characters that reflect your community story.
- Develop setting by writing descriptively about your community’s natural assets.
- Develop plot by identifying adversity and how the characters can or cannot overcome it.
- Develop dialogue by imagining what the characters say to each other.
- Develop voice by thinking about audience.

Try this exercise to develop a voice in your writing:

- Imagine you are telling the story to a child. Write it that way.
- Imagine you are telling this story to a hero of yours. Write it that way.
- Imagine you are telling this story to your best friend. Write it that way.
- Imagine you are telling this story to participants at a community forum. Write it that way.
- How does the voice in the writing change depending on the audience?

Here’s an example:

Many collaboratives have held special events like health fairs. The data says there were a number of children who attended, and they took part in a number of activities and learned about good health practices. These are important facts.

How could you transform these facts into a story?

- What do the children look like?
- What kind of a day is it? Is the weather good?
- Was the fair held in a particularly beautiful setting?
- Or a setting made beautiful by the event?
- What happened that was surprising? Funny? Disturbing?
- What did people say to one another that was interesting?

Could you write a children’s story from these facts? Could you write a presentation for a forum? How could you use this information to mobilize additional resources?
When the author of this Guide Book left her position as collaborative coordinator to continue in other areas of community work, she received a plaque from collaborative members. Somehow its words seem appropriate to close these offerings on ways to improve the health of children through community development. All those who do this kind of work know it is challenging, sometimes overwhelming, but always rewarding.

Congratulations on all your successes!

To laugh often and much;
to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children;
to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends;
to appreciate beauty;
to find the best in others;
to leave the world a bit better;
whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition,
to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived...

This is to have Succeeded.


Labonte, Ronald and Joan Feather. *Handbook on Using Stories in Health Promotion Practice.* Prairie Region Health Promotion Research Center, University of Saskatchewan.


ENDNOTES

1 See page 9 for a detailed tipsheet on facilitative leadership.

2 See several resources on collaboration in Suggested Reading.

3 Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) originated with the work of John McKnight and John Kretzmann. See Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path to Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets in Suggested Reading.

4 A facilitator is a group leader who will guide the process. In the beginning phases of the CPHC initiative, coordinators most often served as facilitators; however Action Visioning is not difficult, and anyone willing to read the instructions and guide others through the activity can serve as a facilitator.

5 Please see the complete discussion of outcomes and indicators contained in Chapters 2 & 3 of We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guide Book.

6 Please see more information on the Institute for Cultural Affairs in Suggested Reading. Their Technology of Participation and Strategic Planning tools have been invaluable to us at the Center for Collaborative Planning and to all the communities we work with.

7 Pages 41-43 and 46 are devoted to mapping and mobilizing community resources.

8 See McKnight and Kretzmann, Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path to Identifying and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets for a complete discussion of mapping and mobilizing the assets of individuals, associations and institutions.

9 See Kretzmann and McKnight, A Guide to Capacity Inventories in Suggested Reading.

10 Also see the “Camptonville Tree” in the Appendix for a creative way to map local resources.

11 See McKnight and Kretzmann, Voluntary Associations in Low Income Neighborhoods in Suggested Reading.

12 See the Trinity County Association wheel in the appendix.

13 These were adapted from several addresses to CPHC collaboratives when John McKnight visited northern California in 1995.

14 See information on the Savannah Project in Puntenney and Moore, City-Sponsored Community Building, in Suggested Reading.
The Policy Circle has been adapted from *The Spectrum of Prevention* developed by Larry Cohen while he was with the Contra Costa County Health Services Department Prevention Program. The spectrum was developed to describe a comprehensive approach to prevention efforts. It derives from the work of Marshall Swift, M.D. and is based on the belief that in order to be most effective, community health prevention efforts must embrace change at different levels, from individual knowledge and awareness of an issue to policy-change efforts.

See a complete discussion of outcomes and indicators in *We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guide Book*.

This discussion is summarized from Chapter 1, *We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guide Book*.

Used with permission, *From the Ground Up! A Workbook on Coalition Building and Community Development*. AHEC/Community Partners, Amherst, MA.


See information on capacity inventories on page 36.

See information on capacity inventories on page 36.
CAMPTONVILLE’S CAPACITY INVENTORY

Camptonville Community
What is the Neighborhood Network?
People in Camptonville have a wealth of skills and talent gained from work, home or just plain living. The Network is a way to connect those who want to volunteer, trade or be paid to help, with those who want services. These are connections that strengthen our community.

What can you share with others?
What do you need?

Complete this inventory of your skills and talents and return it to:
Name of Coordinator
Network
Address, City, State, Zip and Phone

Your Information:
Name: _______________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________________
Phone: ______________________Best time to call: __________________
Age group (circle one) under 18 over 18
I give my permission for the Resource Network to enter my information from this inventory into the C’ville Neighborhood Network.
Signed: _________________________  Date: _______________________

List your business/service in the “2000 Gold Pages”.
Name: ___________________________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________________________________________________
(you will be contacted when we begin preparing the next edition)

Camptonville
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>willing to volunteer</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>willing to be paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION &amp; YOUTH</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutor children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listen to a child</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>read aloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read to children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in a literacy program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help in the school library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help in a child’s classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help in the cafeteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaperone dances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help w/Club Live</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boy/Girl Scouts</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Parents Club</em> meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund-raisers</td>
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<tr>
<td>C’Ville Olympics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year-end picnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back-to-school night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walk-a-thon</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Twilight School</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach a class, describe:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help w/sign-ins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make snacks</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RECREATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Team sports type (</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aerobics</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECREATION CONT.</th>
<th>I AM willing to volunteer</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>willing to be paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martial Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaperone a field trip</td>
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<td>Board games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Guarding</td>
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<td>Certified? (</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running/track</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor (hiking, fishing, biking, camping)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE ARTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storytelling activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawing or painting</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ceramics</td>
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<td>Photography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theater/acting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type (</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance, Type (</td>
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<td>Crafts, Type (</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poetry/writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOME ARTS</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach cooking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cake decorating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catering</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOME ARTS CONT.</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>willing to be paid</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hairdressing/cutting</td>
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<td>Manicuring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewing/altering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quilting</td>
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<td>Knitting/crocheting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach gardening</td>
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<td>Parenting skills</td>
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<td>Parent support groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach budgeting</td>
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<td>Teach housekeeping skills</td>
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<td>Teach nutrition</td>
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<td>Pet grooming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOME MAINTENANCE/CONSTRUCTION</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean chimneys</td>
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<td>Clean gutters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yardwork/mowing lawns</td>
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<td>Pruning fruit trees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firewood (stacking, cutting, hauling)</td>
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<td>Garden maintenance</td>
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<td>Watering</td>
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<td>Brushing/chipping</td>
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<td>Snow removal</td>
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<td>Furniture moving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture repair</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOME MAINTENANCE/CONSTRUCTION</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>willing to be paid</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Window washing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housecleaning</td>
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<td>Repair work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demolition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tile work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drywall and tape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plumbing</td>
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<td>Electrical</td>
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<td>Roofing</td>
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<td>House sitting</td>
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<td>Pet sitting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEALTH/HOME HELP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Care for elderly/homebound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respite care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit or call someone who is homebound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housekeeping-Lice control assistance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Health Care</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any license?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cook and deliver meals for someone in need</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give to a family in need:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Household items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Holiday basket items</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTH/HOME HELP</th>
<th>I AM willing to volunteer</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>I AM willing to be paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive someone to an appointment in town</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drive a senior to the NSJ luncheon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do errands for someone in need</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other professional health services:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFFICE/BUSINESS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organize and plan special events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write articles for <em>The Courier</em></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help staple <em>The Courier</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Videotape special events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video-editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work on a website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design flyers, posters, ads, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute fliers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY Action Teams:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please check one or more of the spaces next to the item that you would be willing to volunteer, barter, or be paid to do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I AM willing to volunteer</th>
<th>I AM willing to barter (trade services for other services)</th>
<th>willing to be paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY Seniors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participate in Make a Difference Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work on plans for a Community Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help at the annual Fire Department Picnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD CARE</td>
<td>Are you licensed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for babies (under 1 year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Care for children (1-6 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Care for children (7-13 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operate a home day care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby-sitting</td>
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<tr>
<td>(I am a teen or adult)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I am interested in the following:
(Please check one or more)
____ Becoming a licensed childcare provider
____ Children’s Playgroup
____ Preschool
____ Becoming a licensed Foster Care Home
____ Taking a baby-sitting class
____ Other

Do you have a skill or talent that’s not listed? Tell us about it!
Oh to be a child again... to feel the joy of the many triumphs and to experience