Identify Assets/Resources Available

Planning effective health interventions requires mapping community assets. Asset mapping (https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/resources/Documents/DorfmanMappingCommunityAssetsWorkBook.pdf) is a systematic process of cataloging key services, benefits, and resources within the community, such as individuals' skill sets, organizational resources, physical space, institutions, associations, and elements of the local economy. These assets can be used by your program to overcome barriers to health. Asset mapping can help to:

- Identify community assets and strengths

- Ensure the intervention's relevance to community needs

- Obtain buy-in from the community

There are multiple approaches to preparing a community asset map. One approach is for the convening organization to prepare and present a draft asset map to the members of a community network for discussion and revision.

Figure 1: A Sample Community Asset Map

Examples of Community Assets that Might be Included in an Asset Map

Associations:
Animal care groups
Anti-crime groups
Block clubs
Business organizations
Charitable groups
Civic event groups
Special needs groups
Education groups
Elderly groups
Environmental groups

Physical Space:
Gardens
Parks
Playgrounds
Parking lots
Bike paths
Forest/forest preserves
Picnic areas
Campsites
Fishing spots
Duck ponds

Institutions:
Schools
Universities
Community colleges
Hospitals
Libraries
Social service agencies
Nonprofits
Museums
Fire departments
Media

Individuals:
Gifts, skills, capacities, knowledge and traits of:
Youth
Older adults
Artists
TANF recipients
People with disabilities
Students
Parents
Entrepreneurs

Local Economy:
Business
Consumer expenditures
Merchants
Chamber of commerce
Business associations
Banks
Credit unions
Foundations
Institutional purchasing power

Source: Discovering Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets and Your Organization's Capacity (https://community-wealth.org/sites/clone.community-wealth.org/files/downloads/tool-ABCD-capacity%20bldg.pdf), Kretzmann, J. & McKnight, J.; Asset-Based Community Development Institute, School of Education and Social Policy; Northwestern University, 2005.

Other examples of community assets may include: emergency medical services, nursing or adult care homes, mental health facilities, community health centers, health clinics, home health and hospice care, school health services, medical and health transportation, dental care providers, homeless health projects, free clinics and pharmacies, recreational facilities and fitness centers, pharmacy services, ancillary services (X-ray, laboratory), voluntary/private medical facilities, substance and alcohol abuse services, medical and health equipment suppliers, dialysis centers, chiropractic services, maternal and child care (e.g., midwife services/birth centers).

Resources to Learn More

Brainstorm: Community Assets (http://www.healthypeople.gov/sites/default/files/BrainstormCommunity.pdf)
Document
A list to help guide brainstorming of community strengths.
Organization(s): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Discovering Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets and Your Organization's Capacity (http://www.chs.ubc.ca/archives/files/Discovering%20Community%20Power.pdf)
Document
Helps organizations connect with and invest community assets, and strengthen current and future community based projects, activities, and proposals.
Author(s): Kretzmann, J. & McKnight, J.
Organization(s): Asset-Based Community Development Institute, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University
Date: 2005

Identify Community Assets and Resources (https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/key-activities/18389#key-activity-5)
Website
Tools to help identify and assess a community's strengths and assets.
Organization(s): County Health Rankings and Roadmaps

Mapping Community Assets Workbook (https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1050&context=slcecurriculum)
Document
This toolkit guides communities through the process of identifying resources and assets in their community.
Author(s): Dorfman, D.
Date: 9/1998

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