The ABCD Model How to Unlock Gifts in a Community and Organization

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Sample PPT
Pair up with a person you don’t know very well. Take a few minutes to think about your assets and then take about five minutes each to share these assets with the other person in three realms of knowing.

**Hand** – Physical skills you possess that you would be willing to teach others. I.E., carpentry, photography, painting, bicycle repair…

**Head** – Knowledge that you have in a particular area like child development, health care, history of the neighborhood…

**Heart** – What are your passions; what stirs you to action; what would you walk across hot coals for?
The Dilemma

People and Communities have deficiencies & needs

People and Communities have skills and talents
Asset Based Community Development

It is the capacities of local people and their associations that build powerful communities...

....in fact that is all that ever does

What can we do with what we already have?
What is ABCD?

• The belief that neighborhoods and communities are built by focusing on the strengths and capacities of the citizens and associations that call the community “home.”

• A place based approach focusing on the assets of an identified geographic area.

• The belief that the assets of a community's institutions can be identified and mobilized to build community not just deliver services.

• A range of approaches and tools, such as asset mapping, that can put these beliefs into practice.
Community Building Approach

To help kids succeed

Children do well when their families do well,

And, families do better when they live in supportive neighborhoods and communities.
Everyone should have the opportunity to be a producer of their own and their community’s well-being.

It takes everyone to build a strong and safe community.
The Role of Agencies and Programs should not be to just fill up our client’s needs.

The most effective role we can play is to work to remove barriers so that people have the opportunity to be a producer of their own and their community’s well-being.
Determinants of Health

1. Personal behavior

2. Social relationships (networks of support)

3. Physical environment

4. Economic status

5. Access to health care
Ingredients of a Healthy Community

Time & Money Exchanges

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Effective Communities

- Look inside first to solve problems
- Relationships are seen as power
- Have a good sense of assets and capacities, not just needs
- Leaders open doors
- Citizens are involved
- People take responsibility
The Three Acts of ABCD

Identify

Ask

Connect
Needs Map: Community

- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Uninsured
- Truancy
- Crime
- Teen Mothers
- Mentally Ill
- Homeless
- Delinquency
- Labeled People
- Gang Members
- School Dropouts
- Housing Projects
- Illiteracy

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Consequences of the Power of the Needs Map

• Internalizations of the “deficiencies” identified by local residents
• Destruction of social capital
• Reinforcement of narrow categorical funding flows
• Direction of funds toward professional helpers, not residents
• Focus on “leaders” who magnify deficiencies
• Rewards failure, produces dependency
• Creates hopelessness
The Asset Map

Local Institutions

Citizens’ Associations

Gifts of Individuals

Skills  Youth  Seniors

Artists  Labeled People

Businesses  Libraries  Schools

Churches  Block Clubs

Hospitals  Athletic Groups  Cultural Groups  Parks
Principles of Asset Mapping

• Shift in Power!!!
• Inclusiveness – all people have gifts and talents
• Relationship building
• People, not programs build power in a community
• Welcoming the stranger
• Learning community atmosphere
• Place based
• Cooperative orientation
Strong People and Effective Programs – It takes both.
Two Tools

Control

Produce a lot of the Same Thing

Need Consumers/Clients

Consent/Choice/Voluntary

Produce Care

Create Engaged Residents
Two Tools

We Need them Both to do the Right Jobs!!
Gifts of Individuals
Why don’t People Participate?

• Not their agenda
• Transportation
• Child Care
• Schedule
• Attitude of the group (pessimistic/not welcoming)
• Lack of information
• Limited experience
• History of being ignored
• Resistant leaders
• Overcommitted
• Poor Organization
• History of unproductive meetings
How Do You Motivate People to volunteer and give?

Focus on the gifts of their Heart
Gifts of Local Associations
Types of Associations

- Artistic
- Business
- Charitable
- Faith based
- Civic events
- Collectors groups
- Community support groups
- Elderly groups
- Ethnic and cultural groups
- Health and fitness groups
- Special interest groups
- Media and communications

- Self Help groups
- Neighborhood associations
- Block Watches
- Outdoor groups
- Environmental groups
- Political organizations
- School groups
- Social cause groups
- Sports leagues
- Study groups
- Survivors’ groups
- Veterans’ groups
- Women’s groups
Power of Associations

1. Effective in Action

2. Amplifier of Gifts

3. Creative

4. Reach large numbers
Gifts of Local Institutions

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Types of Institutions

- Businesses
- Government
- Agencies
Institutional Assets

More than an Institution’s Products or Services

“A neighborhood may not need an agency’s hours of counseling, what they need is the agency’s copy machine or meeting room or their staff’s computer experience.”

“Ask the neighborhood what they need…do not just tell them what services you offer.”

“Never do anything that nobody wants”
Twelve Guiding Principles for Community Development: ABCD in Action

- Everyone has gifts
- Relationships build a community
- Citizens at the center
- Leaders involve others as active members of the community
- Everyone cares about something
- What they care about is their motivation to act
- Listening conversations
- Asking questions rather than giving answers invites stronger participation
- Ask, ask, ask
- A citizen centered organization is the key to community engagement
- Institutions have reached their limits in problem-solving
- Institutions as servants
Community Building Competencies

- Community Partnering
- Information Sharing
- Initiative
- Community Understanding
- Vision
- Empowerment and Influencing
- Conceptual Mapping
- Listening and Understanding

Source: DTI
Perhaps the most important contributor to a community’s success is a belief in its abilities rather than in its problems.
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