

ASSETS FOR YOUTH WORKGROUP
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 14, 2003

Virginia National Bank
12:00pm-1:30pm

Members Present:

Harold Boyd
Carl Brown
Lee Davis
Kathy Dowd
Johnny Ellen
Nikki Evans-Bowles
Sarah Green-Holland
Carlton Gregory
Sibley Johns
Heather Kellams
Winx Lawrence
Relda Manuel
Grant Mussman

Lacy Peale
Tim Sinatra
Kala Somerville
Shannon Worrell

Staff Present:

Saphira Baker
Gretchen Ellis
Linda Rahman

Handouts

Draft Roster of Names, address, emails
2002 Out of School Youth Study
Models for Youth Asset/Inventory Mapping

November, 2003 Meeting

I. Welcome/Introductions – W. Lawrence

W. Lawrence called the meeting to order and each member introduced themselves and the agency they were affiliated with. A re-cap of topics raised at the last meeting was given. Topics included:

- The age of the children the workgroup is targeting (middle school and high school).
- The issues of transportation (i.e., cost, lack of availability, safety).
- Parent involvement
- Strategies to pass along – “best practices”.
- Costs - the stigma associated with the cost of activities for youth. Any advantages to charging a minimal fee?
- Menu of opportunities – what’s out there and what’s missing?
- Giving children the sense of independence. How do we involve children in the planning?
- Getting the word out on programs.

The members discussed what they would like to see get accomplished, in response to W. Lawrence’s question: “If this were our last meeting, what would you like to be congratulating ourselves on successfully accomplishing?” They also provided written responses.

- A centralized information system so that children, parents and service providers can access information. Information sharing.
- Access services for rural youth. We are deficient in rural areas; youth activities are limited.
- The barriers are cost and transportation. Increase access for kids with a system in place where transportation is paid and equipment is provided.
- A system/program among schools and activities/programs to respond to youth, recruit at risk youth to participate and educate community on need for healthy activities for all youth.
- Ensure that the Albemarle community schools/agencies are included in every facet of this planning process.

- Getting parents involved in children's activities.
- No achievement gap in minority groups. All students passing SOLs. SOLs are a high priority issue.
- Better communication – giving parents a voice and better participation. Go to them instead of them coming to us.
- More broad based services in technology and education (i.e., carpentry, arts, music, architecture). For the school to work hand-in-hand with parents on what their child would be good at and interested in outside of athletics.
- Kids getting academic credit for participating in after school programs.
- The group to identify and encourage productive ways to partner with each other to share resources, recruit more kids to the programs they want and need, and take greater collective stewardship of our successes and failures.
- A community calendar with after school hours filled with menu of opportunities/activities across the community and a bus system bringing children to the door.
- More communication/collaboration with agencies to include underserved youth and their parents.
- The 2005-2006 CCF Community Needs Assessment show more kids are involved in productive activities and the income and race gap is gone. I would also like to figure out how to engage older teens in activities.
- See an overall plan that addresses the needs of community kids recognized and responded to by all parties.
- Come up with solutions for involving sub-populations of less involved youth in extra-curricular activities.
- A youth program toolkit that can be distributed to schools and agencies.

II. Inventory of Youths' Interests and Available assets

How do we get the best grasp on what assets are available? S. Baker asked members to please look at the Out-of-School Programs Survey (a synopsis of the results for out-of school programs in the Charlottesville/Albemarle community by Samantha Gavin, an intern) and see if your agency is listed and if not, please write in your programs. Do you feel this is good enough to build on? Do the observations seem reasonable? Look at list and email within next two weeks if you can't do today.

III. How do we decrease the gap in participation?

G. Ellis discussed several models of engaging youth. The first was Youth IMPACT. It was a yearlong research project conducted by youth in San Francisco. Youths were hired to see which organizations worked and which didn't, or were less inviting. The report is a 33-page book with recommendations. One recommendation was the 10 commandments of what helps make a program successful. Commandments are:

1. Thou must have a high and plentiful supply of great snacks.
2. Thou must have flexible hours.
3. All who choose to work at thy program must have a great attitude and treat everyone with respect.
4. Thou shall hire staff that reflect thy communities and experiences of youth thou serve.
5. Thy computers must connect to the Internet.
6. Thou must provide enough supplies for thy participants.
7. Thou shalt reach out into the community to know thy neighbors.
8. Thou must have a clean and specious environment, free of all rodents.
9. All thy participants must enjoy thy program and spread laughter throughout thy CSO.
10. Thou shalt involve thy youth in the evaluation of thy programs!

G. Ellis described another method, Community YouthMapping. It is a method used effectively to engage kids in community research and planning. This model has been used successfully in over 50 localities in 12 states. It is a process in which young people (ages 14-18) canvas their neighborhoods to identify resource for children and families. But it requires money.

The group discussed having a complete list of programs that children can get involved in. One member suggested a guide on activities that can be given to guidance counselors for distribution to youths and parents or updating the *Guide to Youth Services* to include program schedules on a daily basis. It would be helpful to label different activities with different colors (i.e., blue for skills, green for sports, pink for the arts). H. Boyd informed members that Jouett Middle School has a wealth of information on what kids can do on weekends. R. Manuel suggested creating a class for community leaders to come in and train kids to do something during school; help with SOL, self-esteem, raising leadership potential. Developing leaders was discussed. Utilizing those youth leaders to develop other youth leaders who will then bring other students in on activities. It was determined that developing a protocol on how to conduct youth mapping would be useful. W. Lawrence asked if anyone was willing to think about this, what it might look like and bring forward. Volunteers were G. Ellis, R. Manuel, H. Kellams and L. Pealey. Objective is to nominate a diverse group of youth to do map accessing and consider possible pilot approaches before undertaking a major initiative.

IV. Sharing Models – T. Sinatra

T. Sinatra was asked to focus on the results of a youth powered evaluation in California. T. Sinatra moved from California three months ago where they had put in place a system where everyone worked together. They had no duplications of services, they expanded services, competed through collaboration and created city-wide information that youth had access to and created hubs in one central area - everybody was under one roof (i.e., Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club). They assembled a diverse group of youths that they empowered to create. They targeted the 11-17 age group and wrote proposal to United Way which granted \$90,000. They sent out 3500 questionnaires and asked:

- Activities teens do or would like to participate in.
- Those not interested in vocational training, what sports they would like to participate in.
- The number of hours/days they participated in extra activities after school.
- Program or services teens thought helpful.
- Number of hours spent in spiritual organization or institution.
- Teen who cannot participate because of costs.
- Teen who cannot participate because of transportation.
- Willingness to participate in an activity with an adult.
- How they feel around diverse groups.
- How often others succeed in pressuring you to do something you do not want to do.
- How often conflicts resulting in violence in their relationships.
- Teens feel there are social groups you cannot belong to.
- Teens feel most comfortable talking to.
- What teens plan to do after school.
- Teen's access to Internet.
- Teens feel community leaders are supportive to.

T. Sinatra summarized that the four main categories of teens concerns are: 1) participating in organized activity needs to increase, 2) resisting peer pressure, 3) learning alternatives to violence, and 4) opposing gangs. Programs that would be helpful: anger management, finances, life planning and tutoring. Strengths: most all felt they are a good friend, comfortable with other races, can talk to other people and plan to go to college. The individuals most trusted were mother and friend. They do not trust their teacher or youth leader. Tim also has reports on parent focus groups. Next time it was suggested we focus on "What would we do differently today if we had those same results in Charlottesville?"

V. Next Steps – S. Baker

1. Developing Youth Mapping strategy or sub-group.
2. Updating out of school study
3. Having someone in the courts and police join workgroup.
4. Discuss the importance of collaboration, parent's involvement or transportation – we will focus on one at the next meeting. The group chose parent involvement - What are the successful strategies to have it occur?
5. Invite someone to our next meeting.
6. Keep in mind that final product will be both new program directions and policy changes/recommendations.

VI. Meeting Wrap Up and Next Meeting Date

- ◆ **THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ASSETS FOR YOUTH WORKGROUP WILL BE AT 12:00PM ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12TH, VIRGINIA NATIONAL BANK BOARDROOM, 2ND LEVEL.**