

ASSETS FOR YOUTH WORKGROUP
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 2004

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

Members Present:

Nikki Bowles
David Brown
Robbie Collins
Kathy Dowd
Kathleen Glenn
Heather Kellams
Winx Lawrence
Relda Manuel
Kala Somerville
Mike Svez
Bob Taibbi
Shannon Worrell

Staff Present:

Saphira Baker
Gretchen Ellis
Linda Rahman

Handouts

Agenda for July 9, 2004 Meeting
Minutes from May 14, 2004 Meeting
Assets for Youth Engagement Study-Draft
Report & Initial Observations
Coordination Sub-Group Report
Preliminary List of Community-Based After-School Opportunities
Draft of Work Plan for Promotional Material

I. Welcome/Introductions

W. Lawrence called the meeting to order, welcomed participants, and thanked them for attending. Members introduced themselves and the agency they were affiliated with. A re-cap of May 14, 2004 meeting/action steps was given.

II. Report back from Youth Engagement Study Sub-group

H. Kellams reported on the Youth Engagement Study Sub-group by giving a recap of the focus group's process. She reported that the focus groups finished meeting on June 4th with 276 students having been interviewed. H. Kellams reported that she saw an attitude shift with allowing the youth to have complete autonomy and some meaningful planning consideration. She stated that the students indicated that they would really like to shape their after-school programs with adults guiding them, but in a real, nurturing, caring, respectful, behind the scenes, kind of way.

H. Kellams further reported that the sub-committee met twice after the process to develop recommendations. R. Collins stated that in his observations, the kids seemed very relieved at the end of the school day and did not necessarily express great interest in participating in after-school activities. However, under certain conditions they would consider after-school programs but they really did not want another adult telling them they had to accomplish something by 4pm. W. Lawrence inquired if there were any differences between high school and middle school students. H. Kellams reported that high school students were more involved, but there was a big difference in the lack of opportunities for kids after school between rural areas and the city. She reported that the one thing the kids did not want to do was anything that would add more pressure to their lives.

G. Ellis stated that this study is a work in progress and they have not yet analyzed all of the data; including looking specifically statistically at the differences in middle and high schools. She reported that there was a significant issue with the lack of activities in after-school programs in two county middle schools (Findley and Walton) that should be investigated. She also stated that

the report fails to show what is really important to the kids and what our observations were. She distributed a 2-page initial observation that was developed. She reported that the kids repeatedly mentioned how they would like places to hang out after school, someplace to eat and drink, listen to music with a variety of activities without a dominating adult. Someplace where they would not be labeled, teased or feel fearful. However, high school students did not want your typical “teen center” or to be stuck with middle school kids. They were also interested in cross-school activities. G. Ellis stated that places for kids to hang out after school are definitely needed in Crozet and Scottsville. She stated that there was very little mention of being involved in parks and recreations as they were not marketed to them in a fashionable, attractive way. Some kids didn’t even know of these options.

Committee members broke into smaller groups to brainstorm and come up with recommendations. The committee members were asked the following questions:

1. What are the four most important youth ideas and recommendations that come from the focus group research?
2. What youth issues are important that deserve further study?
3. Are there important recommendations we have as adults that young people might not have mentioned?

The following are the recommendations from the smaller groups.

What are the four most important youth ideas and recommendations that come from the focus group research?

Group 1

- We need to address the needs for kids to feel socially competent and comfortable
- Quality of leaders
- Transportation
- Cost

Group 2

- Social anxiety and peer participation in addition to getting kids involved in ownership and autonomy and making decisions
- Adult leadership
- Transportation
- Increasing the marketing for the kids that are the hardest to reach. What would it take to get kids involved?

Group 3

- Helping programs connect with kids
- Changing “social anxiety” to “social connection” or “social belonging” so it would be more positive
- Helping programs market involved youth
- Outreach
- Recruitment of kids by kids
- Quality of adult leadership and staff development (possibly developing a toolkit)
- Addressing the lack of resources in the county, not only the transportation but also the lack of programs at Walton with better use of the existing resources, i.e., opening up the gym, pools, and school’s computer lab
- Increase public awareness of scholarships opportunities for after-school activities and encourage recruitment and additional after-school scholarships

What youth issues are important that deserve further study?

Group 1

- The actual cost of different activities and availability of scholarships
- Transportation expansion or other options to get kids where they want to go
- How to make kids more aware of what's out there and making parents aware of financial assistance
- Opening the gyms in middle school, especially at Walton
- Finding out how L.A. addressed gangs

Group 2

- Transportation; what considerations are being done now and the barriers
- Although the study showed a youth center was unpopular, that should be further researched
- Continue to make sure we are reaching the kids

Group 3

- The teen centers - find out why they failed
- Summer employment in time for next summer
- Development of leadership skills

Are there important recommendations we have as adults that young people might not have mentioned?

Group 1

- Community training for adults working with kids; involving the kids in the training.
- Better marketing – transmitted in a way that is more welcoming.
- Better nutrition, working moms, stressed families....

Group 2

- Training youth
- Kids wanting their own safe space but out in the public eye
- Chill period after school for relationship building and eating
- Increased activity so kids are not so tired
- Leader training on how to run youth groups and a support system for youths
- Better marketing and pay to attract the right people to work with kids
- Educating and training adults to work with kids in a service capacity – volunteers who work with youth

Group 3

- Increase awareness of scholarship programs

W. Lawrence stated that we need to include youth voices – this is a very useful experience for the adults and for the youths involved. The training was great, the questions were well structured and helping kids learn to lead.

G. Ellis stated that the kids would like to get back together and were so glad to be asked for their opinions. They are looking for ways to bring them back together.

D. Brown stated CCF is looking for 2 youth representatives (city and county). Since this group has lots of connections with kids, if you know someone to recommend, please send names and recommendations.

III. Coordination Sub-Group – Revised Plan

S. Baker stated that school guidance counselors prefer to have a list of after-school programs to distribute to kids and their parents the first day of school instead of an interactive website. She requested that committee members review the preliminary list of 29 programs, revise as necessary, indicate if scholarships are available and return by email to saphira.baker@charlottesville.org. Members discussed and agreed to add the Scouts to the list.

IV. Update on Summer Employment Opportunities

Tabled until next meeting due to lack of time.

V. Next Steps/Next Meeting Date

W. Lawrence stated the next meeting would be August 13th.

- ◆ **THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ASSETS FOR YOUTH WORKGROUP WILL BE AT 12:00PM ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 2004 VIRGINIA NATIONAL BANK BOARDROOM, 2ND LEVEL.**