

COMMUNITY BUILDING

MAPPING COMMUNITY ASSETS

Best Practices

When implementing an asset mapping activity in your community, the following are important points to consider:

- ❖ Every living person has some gift or capacity of value to others. A strong community recognizes this and helps individuals use their capacities. This helps people feel valued, empowered and connected to the people around them and their community.
- ❖ Your asset mapping activity should have a purpose. Why is your community mapping its assets? What is the bigger picture project?
- ❖ Recognizing asset mapping should help individuals, organizations and institutions actively contribute to the community, not just create a document or list no one will use. From the outset, there should be a plan of how to accomplish this.
- ❖ A thorough inventory of assets takes time and commitment to collect and keep updated.
- ❖ Recognize all groups within a community, including the often marginalized groups of disabled, minorities, unemployed, youth, elderly, seasonal residents or renters. A strong community recognizes the strengths and assets of everyone.
- ❖ Use information collected to build strong networks and relationships within the community to help identify and address common problems
- ❖ Make sure people know the information collected about them is available to the public and they don't have to answer questions on the Capacity Inventory they don't want to.
- ❖ Asset mapping doesn't have to be done just at the community level. It can be done in the setting of a school, a group, an institution or an organization.
- ❖ Projects connecting youth and adults are now viewed as the foundations on which healthy communities are built.

Resources:

Kretzmann, John P. and John L. McKnight. *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 1993.

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