DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 161 UD 032 716

AUTHOR	Smith, Steven Rathgeb
TITLE	How Effects To Fight Substance Abuse Have Strengthened Civic Infrastructure. Lessons Learned Conferences Seminar Report (Washington, D.C., September 29-30, 1997).
INSTITUTION	Join Together, Boston, MA.
SPONS AGENCY	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Princeton, NJ.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	15p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Join Together, 441 Stuart Street, Seventh Floor, Boston, MA 02116; Tel: 617-437-1500; Fax: 617-437-9394; Web site: www.jointogether.org; e-mail: info@jointogether.org
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountability; *Community Action; Conferences; *Networks; *Prevention; Problem Solving; Program Descriptions; Program Effectiveness; Strategic Planning; *Substance Abuse; Urban Areas; Urban Youth

ABSTRACT

A conference in Washington, D.C., brought together leaders from six communities to share their strategies to mobilize residents to fight substance abuse problems. The actions taken by community groups and leaders in the following cities are described: Portland (Oregon); Hampton (Virginia); Baltimore (Maryland); New Haven (Connecticut); Newark (New Jersey); and Kansas City (Missouri). In each of these cities, strengthening the community's civic infrastructure to respond to pressing issues was an unintended but positive outcome of efforts to reduce alcohol and drug abuse. The central strategy of these successful programs has been creating new social and professional networks to reduce substance abuse and crime in their communities. The following lessons can be drawn from the communities' experiences: (1) strategy matters, and a sound strategy is required to guide community efforts; (2) leadership is key to building and sustaining a healthy civic infrastructure; (3) public-private partnerships must exist; and (4) community accountability is crucial. Profiles of the six partnerships provide additional information about their implementation and operation. Suggestions are given for building civic infrastructure. (SLD)

How Efforts to Fight Substance Abuse Have Strengthened Civic Infrastructure

Lessons Learned Conferences
Seminar Report 1998

Join Together

Lessons Learned

conferences

SEMINAR REPORT • 1998

How Efforts to Fight Substance Abuse Have Strengthened Civic Infrastructure

JOIN TOGETHER

Strategies to Fight Substance Abuse Bolster Problem Solving by Communities

All across the country, communities are creating strong, effective networks to fight substance abuse. These networks are comprised of residents, police, businesses, clergy, nonprofit groups and others who have a vested interest in the health and well-being of their neighborhoods. These partnerships provide a diverse array of expertise and resources to help maximize a community's effectiveness in solving common problems such as underage drinking, drunk driving, drug dealing and gang violence.

Once established, the focus of these networks need not be limited to addressing issues related to substance abuse. They can also be used to respond to a host of other problems facing communities — from cleaning up streets and neighborhoods, to creating safe school environments for kids to rebuilding homes and businesses in the wake of a tornado or other natural disaster.

This manner of operating was examined at a recent conference in Washington, D.C., that brought together leaders from six communities to share their strategies to mobilize residents to fight substance abuse problems. In each case, strengthening their community's civic infrastructure to respond to pressing issues was an unintended — but positive — outcome that resulted from their efforts to reduce alcohol and drug abuse.

Mobilizing Citizens can Impact Other Problems

Similar successes are taking place around the nation. In fact, thousands of local community programs are mobilizing citizens to prevent substance abuse and crime and at the same time creating a mechanism to impact other problems. These citizens are part of a larger movement to remedy pressing social problems by improving a community's civic infrastructure.

Civic infrastructure is defined by the National Civic League as "the sum of skills, processes, and relationships that allow communities to come together and solve problems."

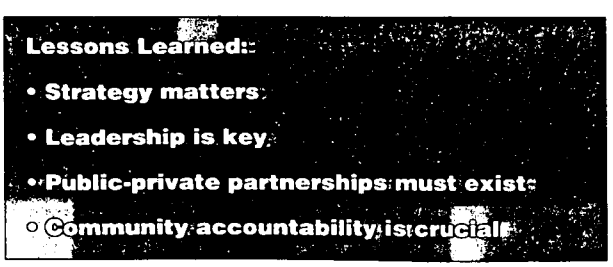
This problem-solving strategy involves strengthening the relationship between many local public and private organizations central to a successful and vibrant community: neighborhood and block associations; PTA chapters; the United Way; service agencies; the public educational system; and pal departments.

The success of these efforts hinges upon the willingness of citizens to volunteer their time, share their expertise, and sustain their participation over time. While the building of civic infrastructure is complicated, it is increasingly regarded as critical if communities are to address urgent problems such as substance abuse, crime and economic inequality.

Despite the widespread interest in and support of a community-based approach to solving social problems, mobilizing citizens and invigorating the civic infrastructure is challenging and in many respects untested. In the 1960s, community initiatives were primarily service agencies providing child care or drug treatment rather then building civic infrastructure. Community programs that exist today go beyond simply providing a service to actually creating "social capital" — the term used by the political scientist Robert Putnam to describe the networks of cooperation in a local community. To be sure, some programs focus on offering drug treatment or mentoring programs. But their central strategy is relational: creating new social and professional networks in order to reduce substance abuse and crime in their communities.

Learning from others

If your community wants to mobilize a greater number of groups and citizens to help prevent substance abuse and crime, the best place to begin is by looking at other communities which have employed successful strategies. This newsletter describes the action taken by community groups and leaders in Portland, Oregon; Hampton, Virginia; Baltimore, Maryland; New Haven, Connecticut; Newark, New Jersey; and Kansas City, Missouri. These communities are good examples of how a strengthened civic infrastructure can be an unintended — but important — outcome of efforts to fight local substance abuse problems. With this in mind, we encourage you to take the lessons learned from these programs and use them to guide your own efforts.



Lesson #1

Strategy Matters

Every community needs a sound strategy to guide its efforts to fight substance abuse. An effective strategy includes a plan to organize residents; specific objectives to be realized by this mobilization; activities for citizens to undertake once they're involved; and a good fit between the problems of the community and program priorities. One benefit of implementing such a strategy may be a healthier civic infrastructure.

Project Neighborhood (PNH) in Kansas City started with a detailed blueprint of how it planned to mobilize the local community. The strategy implemented by PNH included working with the police, reducing liquor sales to minors, and closing neighborhood drug markets. Recently, PNH conducted an extensive assessment of community needs to identify new program priorities and modify its strategy accordingly.

The Comprehensive Communities Program (CCP) in Baltimore is also guided by a carefully developed plan that relies on community mobilizing as an integral component of its overall goal to reduce crime and substance abuse. CCP assigns specific roles to the key individuals and organizations who need to be involved if specific goals are to be achieved. CCP is a coordinated effort of the Mayor's Office on Crime Prevention, Citizens Planning and Housing Association (CPHA), several city agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Similarly, Hampton for Youth (HFY) in Hampton, Virginia, exemplifies a vision of reform based upon youth leadership and its capacity to change the way in which youth participate in the community. The goals are to foster less acceptance of alcohol and drug use among local youngsters and to encourage public and private agencies in the community to create more opportunities for local youth to serve in decision-making roles.

All of these communities recognize the importance of focusing on an issue that already has been identified as a priority by residents. Substance abuse affects all sectors of the community, and therefore addressing it can generate support from a wide range of groups and agencies. Other issues that affect different populations and neighborhoods can do the same.

Incentives Keep Participants Interested

Community programs built on citizen and neighborhood participation depend heavily on the willingness of individuals to volunteer substantial time to planning and implementing program goals.

Frequently, volunteers are the backbone of an organization. In these instances, having a sound strategy in place is even more critical because it provides a scenario around which volunteers can rally. Without a strategy that has specific attainable goals, volunteers are less likely to sign on and more likely to lose interest. If a program does not provide attractive incentives for continued participation, some volunteers will drop out, leaving a small core group to deal with a large workload.

A major incentive to keep people involved is success. Therefore, when developing a strategy, start with challenges which can be taken on with a high likelihood of success. These successes can help solidify people's participation and help form a lasting team. For instance, in New Haven, participation in neighborhood associations is up significantly due in part to measurable improvement in the quality of life. Similar increases in volunteer participation exist in the other community programs that have improved the quality of life for residents. This can be something as simple — and effective — as adding traffic lights to make streets safer and reduce traffic accidents.

Some programs such as PNH in Kansas City and CCP in Baltimore provide direct financial incentives to neighborhood associations to attract volunteers by offering "mini-grants" for specific projects, such as a festival with a prevention theme or a new program for at-risk youth. While valuable, these grants are almost always small-scale and time-limited. Other programs host social events to reward participants while building friendship and trust and retaining their commitment. Even though both methods are beneficial, they are not enough; the reality is that a program will not be able to sustain volunteer participation over the long-term unless they are able to achieve success on the larger goals of the program, such as reducing violence and drug use.

Neighborhood Mobilizers Fight Crime and Drugs in Kansas City

➤ **Project Neighborhood funds "neighborhood mobilizers" who work closely with community residents to help them organize around crime and substance abuse issues.**

These neighborhood mobilizers participate in Kansas City's community policing effort based in "Community Action Networks" (CAN) centers throughout the city. The mobilizers have successfully organized liquor store owners who signed a pledge to reduce underage drinking, and they've supported local neighborhood groups in trying to close problem liquor establishments, restaurants and drug houses. The result has been fewer problem liquor establishments, less public drinking and loitering, more cooperation between the city and the neighborhoods, and new alternative activities for youth. For more information, contact: Keith Brown at (816) 842-8515.

Fair in Springfield, Missouri Turns Residents into Community Builders

➤ **A fair held in Springfield, Missouri, sparked the entire community to come together. The event was created in response to an in-depth newspaper series that examined community issues such as juvenile crime, job training and homelessness. The turnout – 700 residents – was overwhelming. Organizers had hoped to recruit 60 agencies; instead, 120 signed up to exhibit at the event. One Springfield manufacturing company gave its 850 employees special incentive to attend the fair: for each employee who attended the fair and chose a charity to work for, the company donated $100 to that agency. If these factors are any indication of a new trend, Springfield is headed toward a better quality of life due to an increase in citizen involvement. For more information, call Randy Hammer at (417) 836-1111.**

Lesson #2

Leadership is Key

Good leadership is essential to build and sustain a healthy civic infrastructure. Inspiring leaders can be particularly important in situations where there's a lack of trust. The temptation exists among some community programs to focus on the process of collaboration. They assume that leadership is less critical than who participates. However, the six programs profiled here illustrate that leadership is critical. Their experiences also reveal the importance of understanding how leadership needs change over time.

In the past, leaders were usually elected officials or other people in authority who held formal positions of power. But as Hampton for Youth has found, in today's world, leaders can come from a broad range of populations, including local youth who have a vested interest in the future of their neighborhoods. Other nontraditional leaders are increasingly achieving positions of power through their actions rather then their titles.

Leaders can come from all segments of the community: adults, youth, clients, teachers, parents, government, nonprofits and churches.

Regardless of what sector they represent, good leaders create an environment in which other leaders, residents and government officials come together to solve problems. They have knowledge of the local community and networks, and substantive knowledge of substance abuse, crime prevention issues or whatever problem they are addressing.

Good leadership can go a long way in attracting new members and generating enthusiasm for an organization's work. In Baltimore, CHPA recognizes the value of offering extensive training to neighborhood groups and potential leaders. In New Haven, Fighting Back provides regular technical assistance to the management teams which work with community policing substations located in targeted neighborhoods. This helps develop needed infrastructure.

Cultivating youth leadership

If communities are going to identify and nurture the development of youth leaders, they need to make them an integral part of the decision making process — not just relegate them to carrying out the ideas of adults. Youth leaders can and should be involved in creating the solutions to agreed-upon problems such as crime and substance abuse.

Some communities have encouraged youth to conduct a survey of their peers to identify problems and issues they consider most important.

Based on the results of these surveys, youth have developed strategies to address them. Youth in communities such as Los Angeles; Hampton, Virginia; and Portland, Oregon have taken active roles in policy initiatives. Through the efforts of Hampton for Youth, youth have been asked to serve as paid members of municipal boards and advisory councils. Youth leaders have been effective advocates in many communities appearing before city councils and state legislatures to make their views known.

It is important to cultivate youth leaders for several reasons. They provide fresh and imaginative solutions to problems. If they become active participants in their community at an early age, it is likely that they will continue to be active as they grow older. And, it is important to groom new leaders to take the place of leaders who chose to retire or move on to other issues. No matter what approach a community uses, the overall goal should be to build stability, welcome new styles and fight isolation among leaders. And programs that are most successful understand that they should not go for a quick fix, but work to build long-term effective leadership.

Initiatives Focus on Leadership Development

Many organizations today are grappling with the challenge of developing and supporting new leaders. In fact, in a recent Join Together national survey of community groups fighting substance abuse, a third of the lead agencies that responded said that they would like assistance with leadership development. Fortunately, there are an increasing number of local initiatives available to support "up and coming" leaders.

For instance, there is a network of over 200 leadership programs in cities across the country sponsored by groups such as the local Chamber of Commerce, the National Conference of Christians and Jews and other civic organizations. These programs, with names like LeadBoston and Leadership Cleveland, are designed to foster a more diverse, inclusive and informed civic leadership. Individuals interested in improving the overall health of their communities by working with others should investigate whether any of these programs are operating in their community and inquire about participation.

Join Together also runs a National Leadership Fellows program to nurture exceptional leaders and provide them with new skills. Each year, 35 new leaders are selected to participate in the program. Currently, Join Together has over 220 Fellows from 40 states. These Fellows include police officers, elected officials, business leaders, clergy, media, school officials, public relations and marketing experts. Despite their diverse backgrounds and professional experiences, what these leaders share is a commitment to reducing substance abuse by building alliances with others to create a strategy that makes sense for their community. For more information about the Fellows program, contact Join Together at (617) 437-1500.

Involve Youth in Your Efforts

➤ How do you get youth to participate in local efforts? Youth on Board encourages youth to speak out on a host of issues that concern them. This organization provides technical assistance to groups to help them engage young participants. Some of their techniques include placing youth on Boards of Directors, youth advisory councils, school boards and other governing bodies where they can participate as decision-makers. For more information, contact Michelle Curry, Youth on Board, at (617) 623-9900.

Hampton Teens Engage in City Planning

➤ When other teens in Hampton, Va., head off to pizza delivery and baby-sitting jobs after school, David Halliday and Courtney Meredith are making different plans. Halliday, a senior at Hampton Roads Academy, and Meredith, a junior at Phoebus High School, are employed as youth planners in the city's Planning Department. Through Hampton for Youth (HFY), they were hired as paid Planning Department staffers, presenting the youth perspective on municipal planning issues. Both Halliday and Meredith have also been involved in a number of youth leadership programs. Meredith is certified as a prevention trainer, and Halliday is a graduate of Hampton's Youth-Adult Neighborhood College. Now, they are both working on a comprehensive plan for youth in Hampton that will address issues such as employment, transportation, "youth space," and diversity. "We're trying to decide the big issues in the city. What affects youth most," Halliday said. For more information call Cindy Carlson, Hampton for Youth, at (757) 727-1380.

Lesson #3

Public-Private Partnerships Must Exist

Healthy civic infrastructures require active participation by government. Public-private relationships have played a key role in the success of four of the programs highlighted here. Almost inevitably, these community partnerships were dependent on the responsiveness of local government to address their concerns: more police protection; better code enforcement; improved lighting; after-school programs. All of these things require the involvement of local government.

In Baltimore, the location of CCP in the Mayor's Office of Crime Control facilitates cooperation of city departments in responding to neighborhood priorities identified by local associations and groups. Hampton for Youth, a city department, benefited from the support of the mayor and city manager from its inception. And RDI in Portland has deliberately sought out leading public officials in the region to serve on its executive council.

But while government plays a crucial role for all of these examples, often times the relationship with this sector is difficult to maintain and can be the cause of much frustration.

Michael Clark, President of the Citizens Committee for New York City, explains: " A good local government is one that treats citizens as co-producers of the quality of life. Not as clients, not as consumers . . . but as people who need to get our job done. It's not about us telling them what to do anymore. And it's not about doing it all yourself."

Along these lines, it is important to think beyond elected officials when considering working with local government. Since elected politicians can come and go, groups should also build partnerships with non-elected officials such as department heads and managers.

To be sure, the public-private relationship can be a delicate one. Community programs can be manipulated for political purposes, and there's the danger that a program can be co-opted and lose its political effectiveness. Maintaining a balance between public support and program autonomy requires regular discussion and debate among program staff and volunteers.

Trust is Essential for Success

Trust is important for partnerships and coalitions seeking to mobilize residents and professionals successfully. Often groups can build on trust that already exists. For example, key public and private leaders who were long-time friends and associates came together to insure the success of Hampton for

Youth. In Baltimore, the leadership of the Mayor's Council, law center and many neighborhood associations have worked together for years. In New Haven, the executive director of Fighting Back has a history of working with many key players in the city's substance abuse and political arenas.

The lack of city responsiveness and the problems that result are evident in Washington, D.C. The Marshall Heights Community Development Corporation (MHCDC) has tried to prevent substance abuse and crime by urging the adoption of new policing practices, advocating more treatment facilities in the neighborhood and pressuring the city for more aggressive code enforcement. However, MHCDC staff and volunteers have been frustrated and stymied by the multiple problems affecting the District government. The ripple effect of the district's problem on the community have deepened skepticism by community residents about the value of mobilizing in support of program goals.

Similar problems exist in Newark, N.J. A community partnership, Newark Fighting Back has tried for many years to enlist the support of the city and the school district in developing prevention programs for at-risk youth. However, political resistance and financial constraints have created obstacles to cooperation between the partnership and local government, greatly undermining the overall effectiveness of the partnership and discouraging local citizen participation.

In his keynote address, Chris Gates, president of the National Civic League, challenged conference participants to re-think their assumptions about working with local government. He believes the key to the new model of working with government officials is an invigorated "citizen democracy" in which the public jointly owns the public agenda and all involved strive to create a win-win situation. The old model of representative democracy does not give adequate voice or buy-in from the community and too often forces winners and losers, while neglecting to offer a mechanism for developing creative, untried solutions.

Hartsville, S.C., Turns the Community Around

➤ When Hartsville, South Carolina, received the 1996 All-American Cities and Communities Award from the National Civic League, it was a true milestone for this community, which had not long ago been struggling with numerous problems. This comeback was the result of a community collaboration called Hartsville 2000 that cleared and cleaned a closed old mill site that had been donated to the city to be developed into restaurants, shops and public space. At the same time, a community-oriented policing program worked to decrease crime rates and encourage citizen participation in keeping streets safe. Finally, a program called Christmas in April was created to bring together teams of churches, businesses, colleges and schools to repair owner-occupied homes of Hartsville's poor, elderly and handicapped. For more information, contact William Bruton, Jr., at (803) 383-3018.

Management Teams Police New Haven Neighborhoods

➤ Fighting Back New Haven (FBNH), a department of the city of New Haven, supports the "management teams" that are part of the community policing sub-stations in FBNH's target neighborhoods. Some of these teams are part of neighborhood organizations that pre-date the creation of the sub-stations. FBNH has devoted substantial time and resources to building the management teams, and recruiting and mobilizing residents. Over the years, the teams have worked with the New Haven Police to implement community-policing practices and have served as an important source of input on other city projects. The management teams have also been successful in helping neighborhood associations and residents take action against problem liquor establishments and drug houses. The result: neighborhood residents report a decline in drug-related incidents; relations between police and residents have improved; and fewer problem liquor establishments exist. For more information, contact: Sergio Rodriguez at (203) 946-6934.

Lesson #4

Community Accountability is Crucial

Finally, the six programs profiled here illustrate the need for partnerships to be publicly accountable. Periodic reports on the work of these partnerships should describe their strategy, future directions and past accomplishments. This will entail building the collection of data on citizen participation into the daily operations of the partnership. Experience indicates that the euphoria of the initial organizing period can be short-lived, and organizing over the long haul is challenging and requires regular monitoring and feedback to understand what's working and what needs to be changed.

Portland's Regional Drug Initiative has chosen to address the issue of accountability through the annual publication of a Drug Impact Index, which chronicles substance abuse indicators. RDI does not see its role as necessarily having a direct impact on various indicators such as teen drug use, but it strives to play a facilitating or catalyst role, spurring other public and private organizations in the community to take action.

Like RDI, the other five partnerships also demonstrate the need to go beyond the collection of "process" data on participant levels to fully understand the impact that building civic infrastructure has on substance abuse and crime. The current interest in creating a healthier civic infrastructure stems in part from the desire of many people to become involved in decisions affecting their own lives. It reflects a belief that salutary policy results will occur when more people take an active part in local efforts.

When it comes to combating substance abuse and crime, citizen organizing should not be viewed as an end in and of itself, but as a valued intermediate outcome that will improve the life of the community. For this reason, a partnership's strategy needs to be linked to an understanding of its overall policy and program goals. Ideally, the partnership should identify at the outset its priority outcomes and how citizen organizing will promote the attainment of these goals. For instance, CCP in Baltimore has concrete goals to measure the impact of its local neighborhood organizing and program support. Therefore, it should be able to specify how the strategies of the neighborhood associations have reduced crime and substance abuse.

Issue of Accountability Sparks Conference Debate

What happens when an organization is accused of not meeting its promises? That was the dilemma for the Carter Center's Atlanta Project, which initially faced a storm of media and community criticism when it was perceived that the organization was not following up on its initial promises. As a result, the

organization had to admit to its failings and strive to rebuild its credibility. The project's former director, Jane Smith, encouraged others to learn from her experience and not make the same mistake. "What we want to do is challenge our industry to become accountable. Say what you are, say who you are, measure it, and if you don't do it, a year later say, 'We have to re-define ourselves', or 'We didn't hit the target.' Until we become that kind of human service business, I don't think that things are going to be much better in terms of our clients and our communities." Today, having survived the criticism, Smith said, "The legacy will be that Atlanta now works through partnerships and coalitions, and the turf issues are much, much less. New leadership criteria is being defined by who we need to lead partnerships or coalitions. It's a new definition of leadership." For more information about The Atlanta Project, contact: Doug Greenwell, Program Director, at (404) 881-3400.

Portland Tracks Substance Abuse Problems

When Portland's Regional Drug Initiative (RDI) publishes its annual "Drug Impact Index," local leaders, media, and law enforcement officials take notice. The index, which tracks statistics such as the number of babies born drug-addicted, drug-related arrests, and alcohol-related traffic deaths, is a powerful tool in raising public awareness and spurring community action. "The Drug Impact Index was never developed as an evaluation tool of any specific prevention or treatment program," says Carol Stone, executive director of RDI. "It is really an accountability tool for the community at large, and an information tool so that they can see the progress that's being made. Community groups, as well as the Portland police, have made extensive use of the report." For more information, contact: Carol Stone at (503) 294-7074.

Groups Join Together to Fight Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is everyone's problem, and therefore, everyone in the community can do something about it. At a recent meeting held by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, representatives from 30 membership organizations representing 50 million people across the country stood up and agreed to do their part to fight substance abuse. The groups, which are listed below, signed a civic alliance and promised to collectively volunteer one million hours. You may want to contact members of these organizations in your community to get them involved in your activities.

- AMVETS
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Boys Scouts
- Campfire Boys and Girls
- Civitan International
- General Federation of Women's Clubs
- Girl Scouts
- Independent Order of Odd Fellows
- Junior Chamber International
- Just Say No International
- Knights of Columbus
- The Links, Inc.
- Masons
- Moose International
- National Exchange Club
- National Panhellenic Conference
- National FFA Organization
- National 4-H Organization
- Optimist International
- Pilot International
- Quota International
- Ruritan National
- Soroptimists
- Sertoma International
- United National Indian Tribal Youth
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- YMCA of the USA
- YWCA of the USA

HOW YOU CAN APPLY THE LESSONS LEARNED IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

As the six communities highlighted in this report show, when groups fight substance abuse and crime, they can also have a positive impact on the civic infrastructure. This is because participants have created new partnerships and learned a whole new set of skills that they are then able to apply to a host of other issues. You can use the lessons learned by these organizations and tailor them to fit the needs of your own community. It might help you to begin by asking yourself the following questions:

- What strategies have been successful in addressing other problems in my community?
- What are the pitfalls to be avoided?
- How can community programs sustain increased citizen participation?
- What should the role of local government be in supporting efforts to build civic infrastructure?

Your answers can guide you as you develop a comprehensive strategy and identify appropriate leaders to guide your work, reach out to other groups to create public-private partnerships, and remain accountable to the community by evaluating your efforts.

The Lessons Learned Conferences

The information we have provided here comes from a conference held in the fall of 1997, which was convened by Join Together with a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This is the second in a series of three seminars designed to look at promising practices and systemic changes. The goal of this series is to help broadly disseminate information about programs that are making a difference, so other groups can benefit from the " lessons learned." By bringing together participants from a wide range of disciplines, communities can learn from other's successes.

The first conference, held in the spring of 1997, was on how communities efforts to fight substance abuse have affected health care. Full reports of the proceedings from both of these conferences are available from Join Together.

The third seminar, which was held in the spring of 1998, looked at how fighting substance abuse has affected race relations. A newsletter and report will be released in August, 1998.

Here are some additional things you can do to build the civic infrastructure in your community:

1. Identify civic organizations in your community (*i.e.* Girls Scouts, Rotary Clubs, PTA, Elks, Kiwanis, etc.) and talk to their members to see how you can partner with them. Their members may be interested in volunteering to help clean up neighborhoods, form crime watches and mentor youth. Your members may also be able to support their activities. By working together, you can help create a safer, healthier community.

2. Evaluate your organization's overall strategy. Determine ways you can enhance it to be more effective. You can do this by asking the following questions:
   - What harms from substance abuse are you trying to reduce in your community?
   - How are you doing this?
   - What other groups in the community are already involved or can get involved?
   - How can you work collaboratively with others?
   - How will you know you are making a difference?

3. How do you recruit and recognize volunteers? Do you have a plan in place to utilize peoples' time effectively and keep their interest? Figure out new ways to entice people to participate in your efforts.

4. Reach out to local government agencies and leaders and figure out ways you can work together. Remember that public-private partnerships are key.

5. Set goals for your organization and work hard to meet them. Have a plan in place to evaluate your efforts and celebrate your successes.

Three of the programs highlighted at the conference are funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through their Fighting Back program. These are: Project Neighborhood in Kansas City, Missouri; Marshall Heights Community Development Corporation in Washington, D.C.; and Fighting Back of New Haven, Connecticut.

Resources

Kiwanis International
3636 Woodview Terrace
Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
Ph: (317) 875-8755
Fax: (317) 879-0204
Email: kiwanismail@kiwanis.org
www.kiwanis.org

Kiwanis International is a worldwide organization of men and women whose clubs serve children, develop youth leadership, and address issues of concern to local communities, such as providing mentors for high-risk youth and helping to raise funds for after school programs. For more information, contact the national office listed above or your local chapter.

National Association for Community Leadership
200 S. Meridian Street, Suite 250
Indianapolis, IN 46225
Ph: (317) 637-7408
Fax: (317) 637-7413
Email: commlead@indy.net
www.communityleadership.org

The National Association for Community Leadership works to strengthen and transform communities by enhancing the capacity of inclusive, community leadership development efforts. The association provides resources, training, information and technical assistance.

National Civic League
1445 Market Street, Suite 300
Denver, CO 80202
Ph: (303) 571-4343
Fax: (303) 571-4404
Email: ncl@ncl.org
www.ncl.org/ncl

The National Civic League promotes the principles of collaborative problem-solving and consensus-based decision making and provides technical assistance, training, publishing, research and an awards program.

Youth on Board
58 Day Street, 4th Floor
Somerville, MA 02144
Ph: (617) 623-9900
Fax: (617) 623-4359

Youth on Board works to place youth on Boards of Directors, youth advisory councils, school boards and other governing bodies where youth can participate as decision-makers. It also offers technical assistance to organizations to help them involve youth.

JOIN TOGETHER

If you are interested in getting more information about the Lessons Learned series, contact:

Join Together:
A National Resource for Communities Fighting Substance Abuse and Gun Violence

441 Stuart Street, 7th Floor

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: (617) 437-1500

Fax: (617) 437-9394

Email: info@jointogether.org

www.jointogether.org

Acknowledgments:

Michelle Johnson, MJ Internet Consulting, Jamaica Plain, MA.

Steven Rathgeb Smith, investigator and writer, Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

JOIN TOGETHER

441 Stuart St., 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02116

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

REPRODUCTION BASIS

☒ This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket) form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").