



What Works for Communities

Of all the forces that make for a better world, none is so indispensable, none so powerful, as hope. Without hope people are only half alive. With hope they dream and think and work.

-Charles Sawyer



Remember - community engagement is a process, not a program. When you start to intentionally build a community around youth, you will see some benefits right away - other benefits may take more time. These core elements of community change are the key to creating an ongoing, sustainable difference.



EDUCE THE FRAMEWORK

Drawing the framework from the community creates ownership of the initiative and makes community members the experts.

CREATE A COMMON LANGUAGE

Built on metaphor – a common language for the many healthy initiatives in a community builds on strengths and traditions of the culture and provides a simple language for complex concepts.

BUILD A POSITIVE VISION

Help a community focus on where it wants to be, not on what its barriers are. Too often, bringing together people just to focus on problems results in a feeling of hopelessness.

INVOLVE YOUTH AT EVERY STEP

Work *with* youth, not for them. Gain insight, energy, and build new leaders for true sustainability.

IDENTIFY AND INTEGRATE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Outside instigation may be helpful to get a movement statrted, but local leaders build on the network of relationships that already exist.

APPRECIATE TIMING AND TEMPO

From the Community Readiness Model, we know that the readiness for large changes comes in small steps.

DEVELOP SUSTAINING ACTIVITIES

Actions before and after community engagement events keep the initiative moving and provide continuity.

CELEBRATE SUCCESSES

Build the momentum of positive change by reinforcing the positive actions of individuals and groups. It makes social change fun!