

The e-Advocate Newsletter

The Advocacy Foundation, Inc.

Preparing Individuals, Organizations and Communities to Achieve Their Full Potential



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Strengthening Community Assets

Part I (In A Series of III)

Strengthening Assets vs. Eliminating Deficits

Make a Donation

Hebrews 10:24-25

*Build Strength Into Your Programs;
Focusing on Criticism Only Tears Them Down*

New King James Version

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but *exhorting* one another, and so much the more as you see *the* Day approaching. [Emphasis added]

The Message

²²⁻²⁵ So let's do it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but *spurring each other on*, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

If You Strengthen Your Community's Assets, The Deficits Will Eliminate Themselves

Many professionals put it this way: "Strengths-based, and solution-focused approaches enhance the capacities of individuals, groups, families, neighborhoods and communities to deal with their own challenges. Empowerment results from being treated with respect and having strengths acknowledged and enhanced... This approach orients [people] to focus first on listening and identifying [community] strengths and resources, to understand clearly their goals and aspirations for the future, and to then [offer] support in addressing any barriers or blockages... [Evidence has shown that] this approach [provides] better outcomes than those that prioritize, identify [and focus primarily on] problems and deficits."

- www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strength-based_practice

[Moreover], according to the War on Poverty:

"[D]eveloping and securing assets is not just about individual advancement, it is also about strengthening and stabilizing the broader community through economic prosperity and social mobility."

- www.waronpoverty.org



The Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Weighs In

Addressing the finding that *inappropriate school disciplinary practices* put youth at greater risk of dropping out, illegal behavior, and entry into the justice system, the OJJDP has stated:

"OJJDP does research to support best practices, and one of the things we've learned is that the minute a youth sets foot in detention or confinement, their prospects for success and having a job decrease dramatically and the likelihood that they will end up in the adult criminal system increases exponentially".

- <http://www.ojjdp.gov/newsletter/238120/topstory.html>

Hence, in developing new evidence-based, delinquency prevention programming and strategies, we must strive to design initiatives that will keep our young people out of the criminal process.

Evidence-Based Programming

The National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices

The National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices (www.NREPP.samhsa.gov) has a wide array of tried & tested programs, proven to work in urban, suburban, and rural settings for many different types of initiatives. The database is very easy to search, and very user-friendly. In our experience, we've noticed that grant makers and funding providers are encouraging the inclusion of evidence-based programming in funding applications more and more.

Community Assessment

Don't Forget to Do Your Homework First

Don't forget that before delving into any community-enhancing project or program, you need to research its support levels, as well as its viability. Get online and find a recent (2 to 5 year old) Community Assessment in order to make sure there's a perceived need in your area for the kind of program or service you want to provide. Then reach out to key stakeholders (for samples visit www.NonprofitAdvisors.info).

Thank you for all you do! And as always, feel welcome to contact me directly with any questions, comments, or great ideas!

Jack Johnson

Executive Director

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ADVOCACY
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*Helping Individuals, Organizations & Communities
Achieve Their Full Potential*

The underlying rationale of the juvenile court system is that youth are developmentally different from adults and that their behavior is malleable. Rehabilitation and treatment, therefore, in addition to community protection, are considered to be primary and viable goals.

Limitations are placed on public access to juvenile records because of the belief that juvenile offenders can be successfully rehabilitated, and to avoid their unnecessary stigmatization.

The juvenile justice system follows a psychological casework approach, taking into account a detailed assessment of the youth's history in order to meet his or her specific needs. The juvenile offender faces a hearing, rather than a trial, which incorporates his social history as well as legal factors.

Court proceedings may be confidential to protect privacy.

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