COLLABORATE

Community Coordinating Council
Defining the Community
Leadership Development

continue & strengthen

Section II
ASSESS YOUR COMMUNITY

Needs Assessment
Resource Mapping

re-assess

CHOOSE RESULTS

Creating a Vision Statement
Priority Results

re-evaluate

USE EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Creating an Action Plan
Case Management
Multi-Disciplinary Teams
Family Resource Centers

re-evaluate

INTEGRATE & TRACK YOUR WORK

Measuring Results

Reform

EVALUATE RESULTS & MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR WORK

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

"A problem well stated is a problem half solved."
-- Charles F. Kettering

Description:
Parents, youth, community members, service providers, and local leaders collectively identify the strengths, weaknesses, and priority concerns of the children and families in their community. This assessment will help determine priority results and lay the foundation for an action plan that is community driven.

Resources you'll need:
✔ Surveys/questionnaires to be completed by residents throughout the community. Ensure that non-English speaking residents are included by having surveys/questionnaires translated.
✔ Volunteers (adults and students) willing to administer surveys at places commonly frequented or by going door-to-door in their neighborhood.
✔ Residents, potential partners/allies, and representatives of agencies, community-based organizations, schools, local interest groups and business willing to participate in this important process.
✔ Meeting space, announcements, flip charts, tape recorders, and refreshments for focus groups that will be identifying and discussing community needs.
✔ Trained focus group leaders, some of whom may need bilingual skills.

Track your progress by:
Communicating about: what you want, what you need, how you did, and how you did it.

Approximate time frame:
Determine a reasonable time frame and work diligently to meet it. Sample timelines are attached.

Tools that may be helpful:
(Many of these documents can be accessed and printed from the **"Contents & Process At A Glance"** page under **"Tools"**.)
▪ Surveys/questionnaires.
▪ Focus Group/Key Informant Interview Protocol.
▪ Sample Assessment Focus Group Questions.
▪ Focus Group Summary Statements.
▪ Sample Risk Factor Results.
▪ HelpLine data. Contact the HelpLine Coordinator[1] at the Kern County Economic Opportunity Corporation (KCEOC), for a list of the needs community members from your targeted zip code(s) are calling about.

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[1]Refer to the directory of agencies included in the appendix for the name, address, telephone and fax numbers.

- *The Kern County Needs Assessment Survey: Final Report of Findings*. Community members from 11 regions within Kern County were surveyed to determine what they perceive as the 10 most important needs for their community, as well as the county as a whole. For a copy of this report, contact the United Way of Kern County[1]. Or visit the United Way of Kern County's website at http://www.uwkern.org/.
- Attached article entitled, "A Neighborhood-based Approach to Risk Assessment."
- The Kern County Network for Children's annual *Report Card*. This report provides data regarding population, vital statistics, human services, trends in education, and criminal justice from agencies throughout Kern County and California. Mapped data specific to communities is used whenever possible. For a copy, contact the Kern County Network for Children[1].
- Needs assessment information on file at schools, agencies, and community-based organizations within your community.
- The "Community Needs Assessment Training Manual" provides detailed information regarding why and how communities should complete a needs assessment process. For a copy, contact the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office's Director of School Community Partnerships[1].

Potential barriers to watch for and suggestions for overcoming them:
- Narrowed focus. Do not rely on only one tool (e.g. surveys) to capture information. Valuable insight and an increased understanding of community needs will be gained by combining survey, interview, and focus group data.
- Limited resources. Train volunteers to conduct surveys and lead focus groups. Ask local schools/agencies to administer surveys in exchange for gaining valuable information that will assist them with future grant writing. Ask churches/agencies/schools to donate meeting space for focus groups. Ask local businesses to donate/provide refreshments for focus group participants.
- Biased results. To promote community-wide participation, consider conducting surveys at commonly frequented places (e.g. outside a grocery/discount stores), and during non-traditional work hours (e.g. weekends or evenings). Ensure that non-English speaking residents are included by having surveys translated and bi-lingual focus group leaders.

Success indicators to celebrate:
- Community members realize they share common concerns and begin to mobilize.
- Community members feel their voice was heard in the process and are invested in helping make positive changes happen.
- Your community can articulate its primary needs and priority concerns to policy makers, potential partners, and funding sources.

For technical assistance call:
The Kern County Network for Children[1].

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RESOURCE MAPPING

"There is none so poor as he who knows not the joy of what he has."
-- George Humphrey

Description:
Identifying the strengths and assets that are indigenous or available to your community. Some examples are: schools, helping services, active community members, businesses, etc.

Resources you'll need:

✔ Volunteers willing to identify and gather information regarding the following:

Resources	Information Needed
• Schools, agencies, community-based organizations, self-help organizations, and local interest groups	• Organization name, location, phone number, hours of operation, and contact person • Program name(s), description of serves provided, who qualifies for the service(s), geographic area(s) served, service costs, and referral process(es).
• Individuals and families	• Names, addresses, and phone numbers of individuals who are interested in helping • Description of the types of resources each could contribute (e.g. strong leadership skills, knows lots of families and could help outreach efforts, willing to volunteer for activities and help with projects, etc.).
• Business	• Names, addresses, and phone numbers of businesses and key representatives/contact people who regularly support, have supported the community in the past, or may be willing to get involved • Description of the types of issues they have supported in the past, regularly support, or have expressed an interest in (e.g. literacy, canned food drives, coats for kids, etc.), and notes regarding whether they would likely be willing to donate; cash, products, time, expertise/talent, or the use of their business to support activities (e.g. serving as a canned food drive drop off point, posting meeting/activity announcements, providing space and water for car washes, etc.).
• Others unique to the community	• Names, descriptions, and information about resources ranging from parks that could be used for recreation activities to public transportation.

✔ A volunteer to format, maintain, and update the information so it is accurate and easy for residents and service providers to use.

Track your progress by:
Communication about: what you want, what you need, how you did, and how you did it.

Approximate time frame:
Determine a reasonable time frame and work diligently to meet it. Sample timelines are attached.

Tools that may be helpful:
(Many of these documents can be accessed and printed from the **"Contents & Process At A Glance"** page under **"Tools"**.)
- HelpLine data. Contact the HelpLine Coordinator[1] at the Kern County Economic Opportunity Corporation (KCEOC), for a list of programs/services available in your targeted zip code(s).
- The resource directory published by the Youth Development Coalition. For a free copy contact the City of Bakersfield's Mayor's office[1].
- Resource mappings completed by other communities, agencies, schools, or community-based organizations located in your region of Kern County.
- *Healthy Start Planning Packet*. Published by the Healthy Start Field Office, CRESS Center, University of California, Davis, this document provides strategies for undertaking a successful collaborative planning process.   For a copy, contact the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office's Director of School Community Partnerships[1].
- Kern County Mental Health Department's community-based children's mental health services geographic area map and list of service providers.

Potential barriers to watch for and suggestions for overcoming them:
- This process can be cumbersome and time consuming if experts are not included. Experienced service providers will bring information not only about their agency's programs, but others as well.
- The publication of directories can be expensive, and the information contained in them may change frequently. Service providers and residents can learn up-to-date resource and referral information regarding programs and services available to their community by utilizing the HelpLine[1].

Success indicators to celebrate:
- Community members realize there are more resources available than they knew or may have expected.
- Your community is positioned to fully utilize and maximize available and indigenous resources to achieve your vision and priority results.

For technical assistance call:
The Kern County Network for Children[1].

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