

# Community-Based Planning

Recently, as local communities have faced entrenched challenges such as gangs, drugs, high levels of poverty, high numbers of teenage pregnancies and other social issues, those involved in community development and change (such as academics, researchers and practitioners) have started to look beyond people with shared experiences to identify assets or building blocks for a community. Reasons for this include the breakdown of the nuclear family and loss of influence of some institutions on individual behavior, combined with a call for a return to all the factors that have historically been part of the socialization process.

Community assets include both the people and all the institutions that have a vested interest in and may assist in the socialization and problem-solving processes.

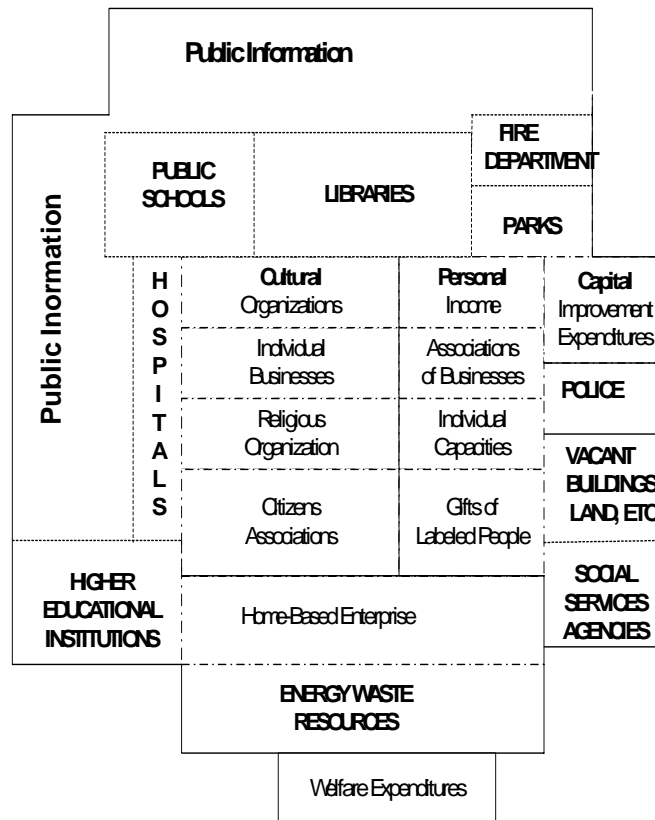
In the diagram that follows, three sets of community assets have been defined as building blocks. The first set is delineated in the center of the diagram by a striped line and are defined as capacities within the community and under community control. These primary building blocks include the individuals, personal income, individual businesses, local organizations, etc. The second level or set of building blocks is delineated in the illustration by a dotted line. These assets are referred to as secondary building blocks and are located within the community but are largely under the control of people outside the community. They include schools, higher education institutions, hospitals and health clinics, libraries, parks and recreation centers, social service agencies, vacant land and buildings, energy and waste resources, etc. The third category is potential building blocks, comprised of resources both originating outside the community and controlled by outsiders. Potential building blocks include other business organizations, artistic organizations, women's/youth/veteran/social cause groups, and service clubs such as Rotary and Kiwanis.

John Kretmann and John McKnight describe how “Across the country, community builders are refocusing attention on capacities and assets, and are inventing new methods for mobilizing neighborhood residents. Most often, however, these efforts concentrate on one or two local assets, generating new relationships and influence for a particular school or church, or park, or community organization. Before us lies the challenge of a more comprehensive asset-based strategy, one which might involve virtually the entire community in the complex process of regeneration.”<sup>1</sup>

## Assets-Defined Community

For planning purposes, community is usually broadly defined to include representatives from all three categories of building blocks to ensure both stakeholders and resource providers or holders are included in the process. They include:

- People who reside in a particular geographically-defined locale and have shared values, beliefs, systems, communication, etc.
- People and/or organizations who work in the locale
- Policy makers and practitioners who influence the locale.



----- Primary Building Blocks: Assets and capacities located inside the neighborhood, largely under neighborhood control  
 ..... Secondary Building Blocks: Assets located within the community, but largely controlled by outsiders  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Potential Building Blocks: Resources originating outside the neighborhood, controlled by outsiders

## Planning

Planning is simply a systematic approach to answering questions about:

- What you want to do
- Who will do it
- When and where it will be done
- How it will be done
- What results you expect to achieve

Planning is an analytic process used to:

- Create a focus for activities and resources to achieve specific results
- Develop shared responsibility for achieving outcomes

## Combining the Concepts of Community and Planning

In the 1950s, community-based planning's foundation came in the movement toward social action in the United States and other countries. In the 1960s, community-based planning became a specific tool for action as planners, political leaders, and voluntary sectors sought a convergence of planning and community participation to address mounting urban and social problems at both the local and national levels while having to acknowledge the failure of many major development initiatives. In the United States, at the political level, the federal government's Community Action Program moved to seek grassroots "maximum feasible participation." The Kennedy and Johnson administrations sought "modest social reforms and a more democratized public sector...urban decentralization and citizen participation."<sup>2</sup>

### Community-Based Planning

*Community planning is characterized by relationships between people and organizations at different levels and involves command resources, policy generation, and "power over." Community planning attends to the planning process, allocation of resources, and development and implementation of projects and events.<sup>10</sup>*

At the community level, community organizers introduced a community-based, constituency-oriented, confrontational politics approach to social action. "Active citizenship" became a means to advocate social reforms in labor unions, civil rights, welfare rights, and women's rights. In the specific area of planning, social organizers helped relevant interest groups to actively oppose "formal" and sanctioned planning efforts that did not include those affected (highway construction, urban renewal, etc). Long and costly delays caused by opposition and court challenges when relevant constituencies were not included in planning processes further pushed community and planning to collaborate in a participatory approach to urban issues.

### Planning Initiatives that Require Community Participation

Today, whether private or public sector, whether national or local in scope, planning initiatives require inclusion of stakeholders early in the process. Stakeholders are involved because their inclusion and participation can build commitment to the effort; their differing perspectives can help identify improved solutions; and inclusion can ensure more accountability for results from the planning team. The list below names some of the federally-funded initiatives that require community participation in the planning process.

- Community development planning
  - Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program
  - Family Investment Centers
  - Public Housing Drug Elimination Program
  - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Social services planning

- Community Partnership Demonstration Program
- Community Demonstration Grants
- Family Preservation and Support Program
- Youth Gang Drug Prevention Program
- Community-Based Family Resource Program
- Justice initiatives
  - Office of Domestic Preparedness
  - Community Policing Programs
  - Operation Weed & Seed
  - Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI)
  - Project Safe Neighborhoods
  - Safe Schools, Healthy Students
  - Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)
  - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)
  - Communities That Care
  - Comprehensive Communities Program

## **Community-Based Planning Models**

Many justice-funded initiatives use either problem-solving or strategic planning approaches. While the processes may contain as few as four steps when addressing a fairly simple community issue (see the SARA process), most comprehensive strategies will specify more steps. The additional steps tend to better define who is going to be included in the process and how the team is going to organize and document the process. The basic four-step process is simply expanded to allow for a more formal and elaborate approach to problem-solving.

The initiatives described below illustrate some of the community-based planning models used to address criminal justice issues. A comparison of the steps shows that the models are essentially the same, key differences being how formal and/or lengthy the process needs to be to address the identified issues.

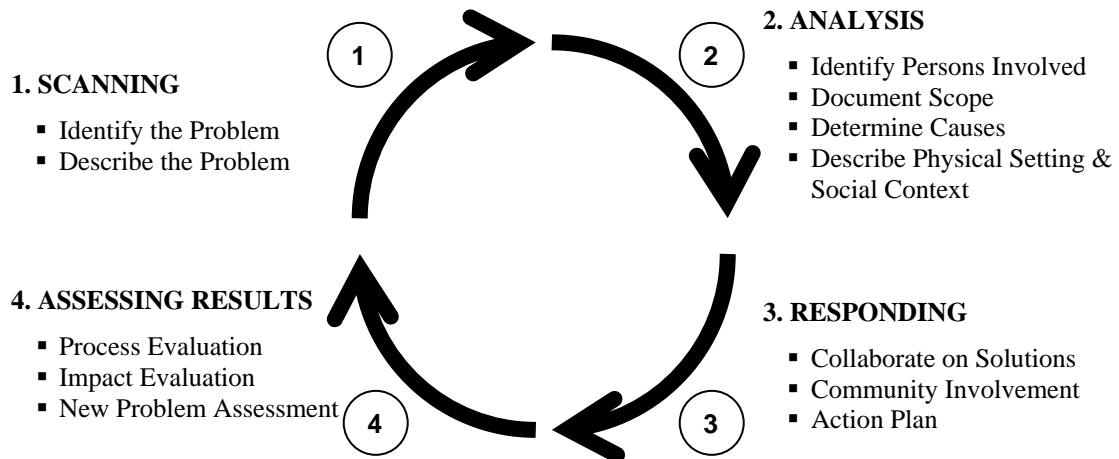
### **Office of Domestic Preparedness**

The Office of Domestic Preparedness works with all 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia to develop comprehensive 3-year Domestic Preparedness Strategies that contain assessments of threat, risk, and public health, as well as level of response capability. Federal,

state, and local agencies for emergency response work together to assess and plan for acts of terrorism through ODP’s strategy development process. State and local emergency responders is broadly defined as public officials, as well as traditional areas including firefighters, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and emergency management agencies.

### SARA Problem Solving Model

The SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Evaluation) model is a common approach used by community policing agencies to identify and solve repeat crime and community problems. The SARA steps are shown below.



Source: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice

### Weed & Seed Approach

Weed & Seed is a community-driven strategic planning approach to community crime eradication and community rebuilding. It requires collaboration between law enforcement at the federal and local levels, a residential community within a city or county, social service organizations, and local government agencies. There are six basic planning stages involved in developing the Weed & Seed strategy.

**Stage 1:** Organize and convene a Weed & Seed steering committee.

**Stage 2:** Select or confirm the designated neighborhood.

**Stage 3:** Conduct a community needs assessment of the designated neighborhood.

**Stage 4:** Select priorities and strategies to address neighborhood problems and unmet needs.

**Stage 5:** Identify goals, objectives, and major tasks.

**Stage 6:** Develop an implementation plan.

Source: Executive Office for Weed and Seed, U.S. Department of Justice, Weed and Seed Implementation Manual, 2001

### Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI)

A multi-agency collaborative for data-driven problem solving, SACSI, uses a research-driven decision making approach to develop focused interventions. Key to the approach is planned enhancements for research and technology infrastructure, including a geographic information

system (GIS) for data sharing across agencies. Also key in the SACSI approach is the collection of both feedback and results and transfer of lessons learned to additional sites.

### **7-Step Strategic Approach Process**

**Step 1.** Identify the problem

**Step 2.** Analyze the problem

**Step 3.** Identify trends, patterns, and opportunities for intervention

**Step 4.** Design the strategy

**Step 5.** Implement the intervention

**Step 6.** Evaluate the intervention

**Step 7.** Adjust the intervention

Source: National Institute of Justice (NIJ) website, Publications, Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI): Enhancing the Analytic Capacity of a Local Problem-Solving Effort ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/sacsi/sacsi.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/sacsi/sacsi.pdf)) URL no longer available.

### **Project Safe Neighborhoods**

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a national strategy to ensure that neighborhoods address the problem of gun violence by forming local partnerships among all levels of government and the community using a uniform and comprehensive approach. Project Safe Neighborhoods was based upon the SACSI model. Each United States Attorney is working with local prosecutors and police departments to develop a task force that includes federal and local officials organized to create a comprehensive strategic plan to fight gun violence. The five elements of a successful gun violence reduction plan include:

- Partnership
- Strategic Planning
- Training
- Community Outreach and Public Awareness
- Accountability

Source: Project Safe Neighborhoods Tool Kit, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs website at [www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov) and National Crime Prevention Council at [www.weprevent.org](http://www.weprevent.org).

### **Safe Schools/Healthy Students**

This initiative combines the tools developed by psychologists with inter-agency cooperation at the Federal and local levels and community participation to devise local approaches to reducing school violence. The primary focus of the initiative is to develop a community-wide, comprehensive response to school violence while better meeting children's mental health needs.

Local participants must include the police department, public mental health system, community-based organizations, and students and their parents. A full-range of mental health diagnostic and treatment services must be provided to any students in need of such services.

Source: Safe Schools/Health Students Program see OJJDP website at [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) and US Department of Education website at [www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS)

### **Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)**

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) employs a community coalition model with focus on specific strategies and outcomes to create and strengthen capacity of coalitions. Initially, CADCA focused on how to develop coalitions by providing training, technical assistance, publications, meetings, and the usual forms of disseminating information to the field. Now CADCA has expanded to a strategic focus—coalition development through user-friendly packaging of field research and training.

#### **7-Step Process for Forming a Coalition**

- Step 1.** Define the problem and its impact on your community
- Step 2.** Identify key stakeholders
- Step 3.** Convene a meeting
- Step 4.** Share perspectives
- Step 5.** Discuss the current reality and the ideal
- Step 6.** Create a vision for your community
- Step 7.** Determine the next steps

Source: Community Anti-Drugs Coalitions of America (CADCA) website, Community Coalitions ([www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org))

### **Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)**

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) works to help every community decrease substance abuse by promoting six strategies for substance abuse prevention: information dissemination, education, alternatives, problem identification and referral, community-based process, and environmental. CSAP also uses a seven-step process for developing substance abuse prevention programs.

#### **7-Step Process for a Substance Abuse Prevention Program**

- Step 1.** Community Readiness
- Step 2.** Needs Assessment
- Step 3.** Prioritizing
- Step 4.** Resource Assessment

**Step 5.** Targeting Efforts

**Step 6.** Best Practices

**Step 7.** Evaluation

Source: Southeast Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies website, adapted from the Western Center from the Application of Prevention Technologies [www.samhsa.gov/centers/csap/csap.html](http://www.samhsa.gov/centers/csap/csap.html)

### **Communities That Care Model**

Communities That Care (CTC) is a broad-based community mobilization and planning model that helps communities develop an integrated approach to promoting the positive development of children and youth and to preventing problem behaviors, including substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and violence. The CTC process serves as the crime and delinquency prevention component of the Comprehensive Strategy (see below) and is integrated with a graduated sanctions approach for those young people who have already entered the juvenile justice system.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders is a community-based juvenile justice and prevention strategy that coordinates prevention and early intervention efforts with the juvenile justice system's response to criminal behavior. This strategy combines:

- Community-based systems that collect and analyze data, prioritize risk factors, and identify gaps in existing resources;
- A juvenile justice system that uses a risk/needs classification system; an objective decision-making system for allocating resources in prevention programs, intervention programs, and the juvenile justice system; and
- A full continuum of effective services in place for youth, including pre-natal through adolescence, community alternatives to incarceration, appropriate confinement programs, and effective aftercare.

Both the Communities That Care and the Comprehensive Strategy models rely heavily on the use of risk and protective factors to encourage community action similar to practices employed in the public health field.

Source: Developmental Research and Programs, Inc and National Council on Crime and Delinquency's Comprehensive Strategy Curriculum: The Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violence, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, April 2000.



## Communities That Care Process



CTC is based on successful public health models of community action which focus upon risk and protective factors and science-based prevention steps. The most common of these models involve seven key steps, illustrated here. CTC has been designed to guide communities through the five most critical and most challenging steps in this process, from community mobilization through outcomes evaluation in developing a comprehensive prevention plan.

Source: [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org)

### Comprehensive Communities Program

Designed as a national crime prevention and control initiative, the Comprehensive Communities Program stressed engaging neighborhood residents and police officers in a citywide strategic planning process. The Comprehensive Communities Program model stressed community policing and community mobilization to address a multi-agency approach to crime reduction.

#### The Comprehensive Communities Program approach:

- Brings together people most affected by crime problems
- Gives each stakeholder a meaningful role in solving problems
- Applies a deliberate planning and implementation process

Source: Comprehensive Communities Program: A Unique Way to Reduce Crime and Enhance Public Safety, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Fact Sheet

## Resources

### Web Sites

<http://prevention.samhsa.gov/>

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

[www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)

Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America

[www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org), <http://prevention.samhsa.gov/>, and <http://www.secapt.org/home.cfm>

Communities That Care

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/sacsi/htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/sacsi/htm) URL no longer available

National Institute of Justice/Strategic Approaches to Community Safety

[www.weprevent.org](http://www.weprevent.org). and [www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov)

Project Safe Neighborhoods Toolkit

[www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) and <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html>

Schools/Health Students Program

[www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

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<sup>1</sup> Kretmann, John and McKnight, John. 1997. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, ACTA Publications.

<sup>9</sup> See Robert Fisher , "Social Action Community Organization" in Meredith Minkler, eds. *Community Organizing & Community Building for Health*. page 59.

<sup>10</sup> See Walter, Cheryl, W. "Community Building Practice." In *Community Organizing & Community Building for Health*, ed. Meredith Minkler, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.