

## Community Resources Assessment

### *What is a community resources assessment?*

- It is a way of identifying assets within a defined community.

### *Why do we conduct community resources assessments?*

- Understand and plan to leverage available resources and assets
- In some cases it can help us elect a population for outreach

### Where do we get our data?

- Asset Mapping

### What will be our outcome?

- It is important to determine how your community will relate the information you have learned about assets. Potential outcomes include a user-friendly resource guide or list of prevention based assets or a more visual “map” of the assets either geographically shown on a map or in a figure such as the social ecological model.

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***Asset Mapping:*** Asset mapping is a technique for identifying local community assets/resources to meet community objectives. The goal is to identify and utilize assets to better the community rather than to focus only on problems and needs. By knowing your resources/assets, you can develop goals and strategies that complement rather than compete with existing resources or that strengthen the resources that already exist so that they are more useful in preventing domestic violence. This approach to gathering data can help us ***start*** to answer this question:

- What are our communities’ resources and assets?

### Advantages

- focuses on what your community already has.
- provides diverse look at community assets.
- involves multiple stakeholders.

### Disadvantages

- community assets may not match key issues.
- people tend to respond to crises rather than possibilities.

Asset mapping is one way to conduct a resource assessment. One of the most well-known models for asset mapping was developed by Kretzman and McKnight, co-directors of The Assets-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993). The ABCD approach to resource assessment focuses on three types of assets including:

- (1) Individuals
- (2) Informal local associations
- (3) Formal institutions

For our work, this approach assists us in identifying people and groups that have the potential to be partners in preventing domestic violence.

**Individual** level assets include gifts, skills, and capacities among community residents such as youth, the elderly, artists, and community volunteers. Kretzman and McKnight provide tools for gathering information about individual assets.

**Informal local associations** include groups such as civic groups, charitable groups, youth clubs, and civic events. This level of assets is about how people are associating with each other on an informal club or group basis.

The **formal institutions** within a community include schools, churches, hospitals, colleges, parks, police departments, and libraries. This is the most formal level where we look to institutions and organizations that have influence over shaping the behavior of organizations and individuals in a society.

Kretzman and McKnight suggest using newspapers or other printed sources such as a phone book and talking to leaders at local institutions to learn about the existence of harder-to-find organizations in a community.

Boyd Rossing, Community Development Specialist, School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison wrote an interesting article called *Identifying, Mapping and Mobilizing Our Assets*. To read this article Scroll Up to the link [DELTA GTO](#). This will take you back to the home page. Under Session 3 click on *Identifying, Mapping and Mobilizing Our Assets*. That will take you to the document. ***This reading is optional and pages 1-8 might be the most relevant.***

### Steps in Mapping Community Assets

- Define the community
  - Are you focused on a specific population (youth, elders, male etc...)?

- Are you focused on a particular geographic area (neighborhood, city, county etc...)?
- Define what you want to do with the information collected
  - How will your community relate the information you have learned about assets?
  - What products will you produce (i.e., user-friendly resource guide or list of prevention based assets or a more visual “map” of the assets either geographically shown on a map or in a figure such as the social ecological model)?
- Select what assets you want to identify
  - Individual
  - Association
  - Institution
- Identify if an asset mapping activity has been done previously in the community
  - How recent is it?
  - Will it provide the information you are looking for?
  - What did or did not work well?
- Develop plan to collect the information
  - When do you need the data?
  - What methods will you use to collect it?
  - What resources (people, copying, database creation and data entry, facilitators) do you need to collect the data?
  - Who is going to do what and by when?
- Create your product
  - Is it a user-friendly resource guide or list of prevention based assets?
  - Is it a visual “map” of the assets either geographically shown on a map or in a figure such as the social ecological model?
- Evaluate your process and results
  - What worked well and what did not?
  - Were you able to create a useful product?
  - What other benefits were derived?

Asset Mapping Example - The Wisconsin Governor’s Council Prevention Committee

The following discusses the exercises employed by the Prevention Committee in Asset Mapping:

- We put together 4 pieces of flip chart paper and drew this conceptual map diagram from Kretzman and McKnight  
<http://www.crteacher.com/mod/resource/view.php?inpopup=true&id=4471>.
- We highlighted what we meant by individuals, informal associations and formal institutions. We tried to explain to the group that they will be

identifying the individuals and groups of our community who might assist with primary prevention of domestic violence. We also read to the group definitions for each level. We talked about some examples like:

- An individual in our community is Mayor Jane Smith because she is supportive of the issues we care about.
- An informal association might be that the Lutheran church because they just began a peace program working with 7<sup>th</sup> graders on non-violent ways of being in this world.
- A formal institution might be Catholic Archdiocese because in our area they made a requirement that all persons planning to get married in the church must take an engagement course and one of the topics will address the spiritual failing of entitlement and domination.
- We asked participants to free think on half sheets what they know about specific assets in each category. On each half sheet we asked them to write down why they think a particular source is an asset.
- We tried to have people focus on primary prevention related assets. (As an after thought, we wished we had have a grounding discussion of what we collectively meant by primary prevention.)
- We then had each individual approach the wall then read each of their sources, why each is an asset and place it in the appropriate section of the wall.
- After everyone has spoken and placed their half sheets on the wall, we asked a series of Focused Conversation Questions:
  - What is one thing that stands out to each of you when you look at the wall? (go around)
  - Where do we have a lot of assets? Where are the gaps?
  - What insights are we having?
  - What will we do next to find out more about these or other assets in our community?

We then realized that further clarification and detail was needed. We found our group identified lots of domestic violence assets, but only a few that were primary prevention in nature. In the end we decided to have the group reorganize assets into 3 categories:

- Who does primary prevention work on domestic violence or on other related social issues? And what are they doing?
- Who is friendly to the issue of domestic violence?
- Other - this mainly became groups and individual that we wished were involved but we didn't have any evidence that they were

We have chosen to focus our attention on primary prevention assets and are planning ways to learn about how they engage in social change by having them present at our meetings, interviewing them about their approach and inviting

them to be a part of the Prevention Committee. We plan to create a user-friendly resource list.

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*Forum: Post a Response to These Questions*

*As you reflect upon what you have read about Community Asset Mapping.*

*Tell us:*

1. What is one aspect of Asset Mapping that stood out to you?
2. What did you like about it and what didn't you like?
3. What approach to collecting asset data would you like to try in answering the question "what are my community's primary prevention assets"?
4. What do you feel like you need more information about in order to try the approach you identified in #3?
5. What kind of products do you think your committee will generate from an Asset Mapping strategy?
6. How might your committee use these asset products in combination with the other needs assessment data you collect in planning what is next for DELTA?

Scroll Up to the link, [DELTA GTO](#). This will take you back to the home page. Under Session Three in the center of the page click on the phrase Forum Session Three. That will take you to these questions. To answer the questions, click reply.

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