

Asset-based Community Development (ABCD), Strategic Planning and Activity

Adapted from abcdinstitute.org by George S. Braucht; brauchtworks.com; Page 1 of 3

1. Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) Principles

- A. Appreciative Inquiry: appreciate and mobilize community talents, skills and assets rather than focusing on problems or needs; strengthens importance, confidence and hope
- B. Community-driven rather than external agency focus, self-identification and analysis of the community's strengths and successes, tell success stories
- C. Recognizes: 1) social capital as important assets, 2) empowering associations and informal linkages within the prosocial or civil community improves the effectiveness and responsiveness of local governance, 3) building relationships over time among community associations and external institutions without creating dependencies, and 4) collaborating for economic development that makes best and first use of its indigenous resources

2. General Methods and Guidelines

- A. Collect individual stories of successful activities to uncover gifts, skills, talents and assets while celebrating achievements and building pride and the realization of confidence as producers, not recipients, of development. Click [here](#) for an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Overview that also contains a link to an AI Interview Guide from [AIM2Flourist](#).
- B. Organize a core group from the storytellers who emerge as leaders committed to exploring further the communities' assets and acting on identified opportunities through their personal networks of causes or passions. Click [here](#) for an ABCD Resources Exploration Sheet template. Start a "living" resource directory that includes other themed topics or resources that are relevant to the group.
- C. Map and document the capacities and assets of individuals, associations and local institutions via personal explorations and relationship building starting with the existing associations of the core group members.
- D. Build (or build on, when already exists) a community vision, mission, values and plan with a representative group of allies who select a themed activity to work on right away that is concrete (what to do to succeed and what success looks like), immediate or short-term, unifying (brings people together), achievable with existing resources, and that strengthens people's skills in ways that are valued – institutions take a back seat in deference to decision-making by the identified allies with their key links to associations and networks. Periodically collect the allies' feedback using the [Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory](#).
- E. Mobilize and link assets for economic development and information sharing initiated by the leaders to their associations who are encouraged to engage by appealing to their interests/purposes, finding common ground and ensuring that they contribute on their own terms eventually producing an association of associations.
- F. Leverage outside activities, investments and resources after utilizing local assets.



3. ABCD Exercise #1. **Theme: “Recovery-friendly” Places to have Fun**

Supplies needed: 1) two flip chart pages, 2) masking tape if pages aren't self-sticking
3) two or more different colored markers

Step 1: Having already done 2. A. and 2. B., your group is on 2. C. Map and document.

Select: 1) a skilled recorder and a PINK OARSI-skilled facilitator for the group and 2) a group name. ~ **1 minute**

Recorder: 1) Put the flip chart pages on a wall or another location where every group member can see them. 2) Write your group name, “Safe” Places to have Fun”, and today's date on the top of both flip chart pages. As closely as possible, write the other group member's exact words and phrases used instead of rephrasing into your words. Alternate between the marker colors to help distinguish each person's statement.

Step 2: Define “safe” by listing up to seven criteria. Specify the characteristics of a “safe” place. What does it look, smell, sound, or feel like so that everyone in your group will know it when they see it? ~ **5 minutes**

Examples: good lighting inside and out, costs less than \$5 a person, security presence in or around the place, children and/or families present, on the bus line, no visible liquor or store, minimal litter, quiet, no marijuana or other drug sense (sight or smell), comfortable temperature...

Recorder: On the first flip chart page, make a “Criteria” subheading and list in a column 1), 2), 3), 4), 5), 6) and 7).

Step 3: Each group member now has an opportunity to share one or two places where YOU have gone to have fun. Be specific about: a) the exact location so other can find it, b) and the name of the owner or other staff person so others can greet her/him then indicate if each criterion is met (✓), unmet (✗) or unknown (?). ~ **2 minutes per participant**

Recorder: For each place, write 1) through 7) in a line for the criteria with enough space to include a ✓ for met, ✗ for not met, or ? for unknown.

- If more than one group completed this exercise, post each group's papers and compare criteria, places and locations. Group members now visit or re-visit each place and report back on their experience and add to or update the criteria ratings.
- Spread the word about local assets to friends and friends of friends including the names of personal contacts in each place to promote the resource. See exercise #2 worksheet.



Asset-based Community Development (ABCD), Strategic Planning and Activity

Adapted from abcdinstitute.org by George S. Braucht; brauchtworks.com; Page 3 of 3

4. ABCD Exercise #2: Identifying Community or Neighborhood Assets Worksheet

Who do you know who can help?	Recreation, Sports and Fun	Volunteering, Education and Employment	Mutual Aid and Faith	Peer and Recovery Community	Other positives about your neighborhood that may not fit into the other domains
What friends and friends of friends may assist?					
What can you get online, or from the library?					

